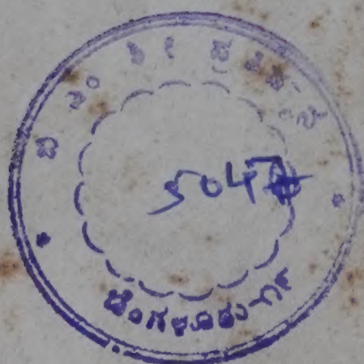
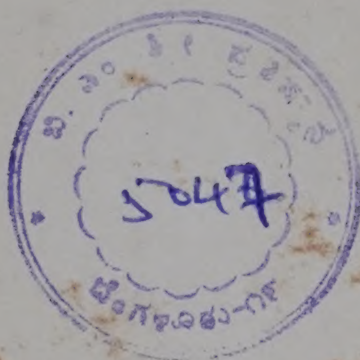
WORLD LITERATURE

R · G · MOULTON

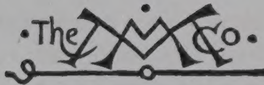
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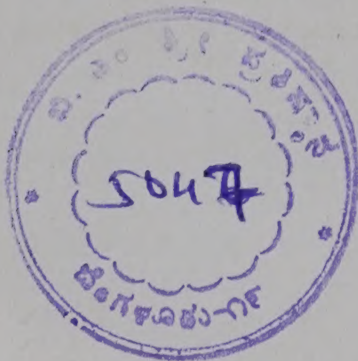
ITS PLACE IN GENERAL CULTURE

BY

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PREFACE

THIS book presents a conception of World Literature, not in the sense of the sum total of particular literatures, but as a unity, the literary field seen in perspective from the point of view of the English-speaking peoples. Theoretical treatment is throughout supplemented by exposition of masterpieces.

To the general reader the book suggests a rational scheme of connection such as should be at the back of every attempt to make choice of "the best books." For the student it illustrates a treatment of the subject unhampered by divisions between particular literatures in different languages, divisions which make the weakness of literary study in our academic systems. Its plea is that such World Literature belongs to every stage of general culture, from the most elementary to the most advanced.

My life has been entirely occupied with the study and the teaching of literature. I have sought in the present work to embody the main results of my experience, so far as these bear upon the field of literature and the general interest of the subject. I purpose, at no distant date, to follow up this work with another, which will be a more formal introduction to literary theory and interpretation.

RICHARD G. MOULTON.

FEBRUARY, 1911.

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INTRODUCTION

I

THE UNITY OF LITERATURE AND THE CONCEPTION OF WORLD LITERATURE

It has been among the signs of our times that popular inquiries have been started at intervals in reference to "The Best Books." Eminent individuals have been importuned to name the ten, the twenty-five, the hundred best books; or — since this is an age of democracy — the selection has been referred to newspaper voting. In all this there seems to be a certain simplicity mingled with a strain of deep wisdom. The simplicity is the naïve idea that everything knowable is of the nature of information, sure to be found in the right compendium; only, as universal wisdom has not yet been alphabetically indexed, it may be necessary to have recourse to an expert. The wisdom latent in such attempted selections is the suggestion that the popular mind, in however crude and shadowy a way, has grasped a principle ignored in more formal study — the essential unity of literature.

This failure to recognize the unity of all literature accounts for the paradox that, while literary study is going on actively all around, yet the study of literature, in any

adequate sense, has yet to begin. When we speak of the study of philosophy, what we have in mind is not the reading of Greek philosophic writers by persons interested in Greek studies, and the reading of German philosophers by persons interested in German studies, and the like: apart from all this we recognize that there is the thing philosophy, with an independent interest and history of its own, the whole being something quite different from the sum of the parts. In other words, we recognize the unity of philosophy. Similarly, we recognize the unity of history, the unity of art; even the separate languages of the world have coalesced into a unity in the study of philology. But when the question is of literature, it would seem as if the humanities side of the educational edifice has been built in water-tight compartments; what goes on in our schools and colleges is the study in one class room of English literature in connection with English history and language, in other class rooms Greek or Latin or French literature in connection with Greek or Latin or French history and language. We look in vain for an independent study of literature itself, and of literature as a whole.

Perhaps it may be objected that such a thing is to be found under the name of Comparative Literature, or the Philosophy of Literature. Comparative Literature is an important advance towards recognizing unity for the whole literary field; but that it is only an advance the title infallibly marks. For who would speak of Comparative Philosophy, or Comparative Mathematics? Such names might indeed be used to denote specific pieces of work; they could never indicate a whole study.

Similarly, the Philosophy of Literature can be nothing more than a single element in the whole study of literature. The most important part of any treatment of literature must be a detailed and loving acquaintance with a large number of actual literary works: in proportion as a reader possesses this will the philosophy of the subject be valuable. To offer it as equivalent to the study of literature would be as futile as to think that a course in economics would of itself make a good business man, or that text-books in psychology and ethics would give a knowledge of human nature.

No doubt there are special difficulties in the way of our compassing the study of literature as a whole. The first of these I should myself consider not so much a difficulty as a prejudice. It is obvious that the study of literature as a whole is impossible without a free use of translations. Now, there is a widespread feeling that the reading of translated literature is a makeshift, and savors of second-hand scholarship. But this idea is itself a product of the departmental study of literature which has prevailed hitherto, in which language and literature have been so inextricably intertwined that it has become difficult to think of the two separately. The idea will not bear rational examination. If a man, instead of reading Homer in Greek, reads him in English, he has unquestionably lost something. But the question arises, Is what he has lost literature? Clearly, a great proportion of what goes to make literature has not been lost; presentation of antique life, swing of epic narrative, conceptions of heroic character and incident, skill of plot, poetical imagery—all these elements of Homeric

literature are open to the reader of translations. But, it will be said, language itself is one of the main factors in literature. This is true, but it must be remembered that the term "language" covers two different things: a considerable proportion of linguistic phenomena is common to related languages and will pass from one to the other, while other elements of language are idiomatic and fixed. What the English reader of Homer has lost is not language, but Greek. And he has not lost the whole of Greek; the skilled translator can convey something of the *ēthos* of idiomatic Greek into his version, writing what may be correct English, but not such English as an Englishman would write. When, however, all abatement has been made, the reader of the translation has suffered a distinct loss; and the classical scholar knows how great that loss is. But the point at issue is not the comparative value of literature and language, but the possibility of realizing literature as a unity. One who accepts the use of translations where necessary secures all factors of literature except language, and a considerable part even of that. One who refuses translations by that fact cuts himself off from the major part of the literary field; his literary scholarship, however polished and precise, can never rise above the provincial.

To which it must be added that the prejudice against translations is of the nature of a prophecy which can fulfil itself: where it has prevailed, the character of translations has approximated to the schoolboy's "crib." On the other hand, it is noteworthy how classical scholars of front rank have devoted themselves to translation as the best form of commentary — Jowett, Munro, Coning-

ton, Jebb, Palmer, Gilbert Murray; how poets of front rank have made themselves interpreters between one language and another—William Morris, Edwin Arnold, Chapman, Dryden, Pope; when precise scholarship and poetic gifts mingle in such men as Mr. Arthur S. Way and Mr. B. B. Rogers, it can be brought about that Homer, Euripides, and Aristophanes shine equally as English and as Greek poetry. Again, men of the highest literary refinement have made strong pronouncements on the side of translated literature. "I do not hesitate," says Emerson in his Essay on Books, "to read all the books I have named, and all good books, in translations. What is really best in any book is translatable; any real insight or broad human sentiment. . . . I rarely read any Greek, Latin, German, Italian—sometimes not a French book—in the original which I can procure in a good version. I like to be beholden to the great metropolitan English speech, the sea which receives tributaries from every region under heaven. I should as soon think of swimming across Charles River when I wish to go to Boston, as of reading all my books in originals, when I have them rendered for me in my mother tongue." Let an appeal, moreover, be made to history. Luther's translation of the Bible, and the English Authorized Version, laid the foundations of literary speech for two nations. Effects on some such wide scale may be looked for when high linguistic scholarship from critical shall turn to creative, and apply itself to naturalizing in each literature the best of all the rest.

Quite apart, however, from this question of translation there are real and formidable difficulties that impede

the study of literature as a whole. In such a subject as language the unit is a word or a phrase: in literature the smallest unit is a whole poem. In philology, and most other studies, we have to deal only with facts: with information, and that information digested. But information on the subject of literature is of all things the most barren; what is wanted in this study is imaginative knowledge, the reaction of the literary matter upon the reader's taste, upon his artistic and spiritual susceptibility. How is it possible to compass the universal field, where the unit is so large, and the appreciation so deep seated?

With such a problem as this we are concerned in the present work only so far as it bears upon general culture. And that which seems to me the proper solution I am expressing by what is the title of this book — World Literature. It must be admitted that the term "world literature" may legitimately be used in more than one sense; I am throughout attaching to it a fixed and special significance. I take a distinction between Universal Literature and World Literature. Universal Literature can only mean the sum total of all literatures. World Literature, as I use the term, is this Universal Literature seen in perspective from a given point of view, presumably the national standpoint of the observer. The difference between the two may be illustrated by the different ways in which the science of Geography and the art of Landscape might deal with the same physical particulars. We have to do with a mountain ten thousand feet high, a tree-fringed pond not a quarter of an acre in extent, a sloping meadow rising perhaps to a hundred

feet, a lake some four hundred miles in length. So far as Geography would take cognizance of these physical features, they must be taken all in their exact dimensions. But Landscape would begin by fixing a point of view: from that point the elements of the landscape would be seen to modify their relative proportions. The distant mountain would diminish to a point of snow; the pond would become the prominent centre, every tree distinct; the meadow would have some softening of remoteness; on the other side the huge lake would appear a silver streak upon the horizon. By a similar kind of perspective, World Literature will be a different thing to the Englishman and to the Japanese: the Shakespeare who bulks so large to the Englishman will be a small detail to the Japanese, while the Chinese literature which makes the foreground in the one literary landscape may be hardly discernible in the other. World Literature will be a different thing even to the Englishman and the Frenchman; only in this case the similar history of the two peoples will make the constituent elements of the two landscapes much the same, and the difference will be mainly in distribution of the parts. More than this, World Literature may be different for different individuals of the same nation: obviously, one man will have a wider outlook, taking in more of universal literature; or it may be that the individuality of the student, or of some teacher who has influenced him, has served as a lens focussing the multiplex particulars of the whole in its own individual arrangement. In each case the World Literature is a real unity; and it is a unity which is a reflection of the unity of all literature. That it is

a reflection relative to the particular student or thinker is a thing inseparable from culture: is indeed what makes the difference between the purely scientific and the educational point of view.

The essential thing is that the observation of the whole field which gives us this World Literature should be correct; in other words, that there should be a sound philosophy at the basis of this perspective grouping. It is the absence of such underlying philosophy that takes the value out of mere lists of "best books" as representations of literature. And the theory on which a view of World Literature is to rest will resolve itself ultimately into two supplementary principles. One of these may be termed the National Literary Pedigree, — the train of historic considerations that connects the reader's nationality with its roots in the far past, and traces its relationship with other parts of the literary field. Here we are on the sure basis of history. But it will be history as seen from the standpoint of literature: literary pedigree may be very different from ethnological or linguistic descent. The other principle is Intrinsic Literary Interest. Quite apart from its association with history literature has an interest and values of its own. The individuality of an author (to take the most obvious cases) or the accidental flowering of some literary type may lift portions of a literature quite out of the position that would have been given them by their historic settings, just as in our landscape illustration the mountain was so distant as to have been invisible if it had not happened to be ten thousand feet in height. The individuality of a [illegible] or an Aristophanes has modified for all of us the

general map of poetry. These two principles, then, of historic connection, and of intrinsic literary value, by their mutual interaction will elaborate a sound basis on which a conception of World Literature may rest.

Such World Literature, conceived from the English point of view, is the subject of the present work. And our first step is to trace the Literary Pedigree of the English-speaking peoples.



II

THE LITERARY PEDIGREE OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLES

I start from the position that our English civilization is the product of two main factors, the gradual union of which has made us what we are. These may be expressed by the terms "Hellenic" and "Hebraic." The one is the ancient Hellenic civilization embodied in the classical literature of Greece and Rome. The other is that special strain of Hebrew civilization which is crystallized in that literature we call the Bible. Our science, our art, our philosophy, our politics, are, in the main, the continuation of processes commenced by the ancient Greeks. But in our spiritual nature we are not Greek, but Hebrew: product of the spiritual movement which has made the Bible. The evolution of our modern life rests upon the gradual intermingling of these Hellenic and Hebraic elements. The two came together for the first time in the conquests of Alexander the Great. These had the effect of extending the Greek culture to all the civilized races, and amongst them to the exclusive Hebrew people; after long resistance even Palestine was Hellenized, while in Alexandria had arisen a new centre of Jewish life only second to Palestine. The two elements met a

second time in the Roman Empire. Once more an Hellenic civilization was covering the world; when this Roman Empire was Christianized, Hebraic culture permeated Hellenic, and Rome was grafted upon the biblical tree. For several centuries the Hellenic and Hebraic cultures, each in an imperfect form, remained in combination. Then by a third revolution the two elements, each now in its full force, were brought into reciprocal influence: and this Renaissance makes the threshold of our modern life.

If for a moment we turn our attention to these two originating elements of our civilization, we find that these seem to hold a summarizing position in reference to the main civilizations of the world. The leading races[1] of the world may conveniently be divided into three classes. Two classes correspond with the Semitic and Aryan families of peoples; the third class is not a related group, but merely a total of the races other than Semitic and Aryan, which have exercised a correspondingly small influence upon history, as history affects ourselves. In the Semitic group it was not the Hebrew people that first came to the front. A point was reached, however, at which other Semitic civilizations seemed to stop short; the Hebrew civilization absorbed what was best in the other Semitic peoples, and further seemed endowed with an endless power of progression. A similar phenomenon is observable in the Aryan stock.

[1] I use this word as a convenient term, without meaning to imply, necessarily, that it was the racial factor, and not (*e.g.*) historical circumstances, that brought about the distinguishing influence of each civilization.



Semitic Civilizations
Babylonian
Assyrian
Egyptian
&c.
Arabic
HEBRAIC
Aryan Civilizations
HELLENIC
Indian
Persian
European Group
Keltic
Norse
Germanic
Extraneous
Finnish
Chinese
Japanese
&c.
Modern English (and European) Culture

Other Aryan civilizations, notably the Indian, seem at first to dominate; yet a point is reached at which these become distinguished by fecundity rather than progressive power, while Hellenic culture alike absorbs all that is best in allied civilizations, and carries forward its own with unlimited development. Thus the two ancient civilizations which are the component factors of our own seem to represent the flower of the civilizations of the world.

Already then we begin to catch the main lines for a scheme of World Literature, as seen from the English point of view. The literatures of the world's leading peoples are seen to stand to us in closer or more remote degrees of relationship. Some literatures are entirely extraneous to the evolution of which we are the product; if they have an interest for us at all, this must rest entirely upon intrinsic literary attractiveness. To others our culture stands in the relation of collateral propinquity. But the Hellenic and Hebraic are to us in the fullest sense ancestral literatures: this is of itself sufficient to give them a foremost place in our conception of World Literature. The claims of Greek culture have always been fully acknowledged. It has been one of the great services of Matthew Arnold to literary study, that he insisted always upon the prominence of the Hebraic factor in our modern culture.

At this point, a digression seems necessary, which I would willingly have avoided. What is the essential spirit of this Hellenism and Hebraism, which have thus been the dominant elements in our history?

As it appears to me, a mistaken conception of Hellenism has obtained currency; mistaken, in the sense of laying unwarranted emphasis on what is not really of prime importance. It has become traditional to find the essence of Hellenism in the civic spirit of Athens during the era of Pericles; that spirit is conceived to be the subordination of all activity to the service of the state; this is taken to be the inspiration of the highest art and poetry of the Greeks; it is supposed to be voiced especially in the dramas of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Aristophanes; it is invaded by the spirit of innovation of which Euripides is the poetic representative; from this point the hold of the state becomes less, individual and general culture prevails more and more, and Hellenism passes into its period of decay.

This seems to me to be a mistaken reading of Hellenism. There is something seductive in the description of an ideal that subordinates all activity to the service of the state, until we remember that the word "state" in such a context has a different meaning from what the word suggests to modern ears. What the Greeks meant by "state" we should express by the word "constitution": the point is, not the devotion of the individual to the good of the community, but the subordination of everything to one particular conception of common life — the highly artificial conception of the city-state. The inability of the Greeks to rise above this ideal is by universal consent recognized as the cause of the submergence of Greek political civilization in the general history of mankind. This ideal, moreover, was maintained by the sacrifice of other ideals: of free-

dom, for Greek life was based on slavery; of family life, for the position of woman was at its lowest in the age of Pericles. Not only are these things true in historic fact, but in the idealization of Athenian political ideas by Plato we find marriage and family life surrendered in order to bolster up a special type of state organization; the whole spirit of the *Republic* is that the governed exist for the sake of the government, and not *vice versa*. Our modern thinking is more in sympathy with the primitive type of life reflected in Homer, with its lofty conception of woman and family life: Euripides is nearer to Homer than is the Athens of his day. Nor does there seem any warrant for the view that the civic spirit of Athens was the inspiration of its art and poetry. Naturally, in plays intended for performance in Athens, there are passages glorifying Athenian institutions; but these have little to do with the general spirit of the dramas. The dominating note of Greek tragedy is a very different thing — overpowering awe in the presence of Destiny. The supreme tragic situation is that of a mortal, like Orestes, placed between opposite destinies — the oracle that forces him to do the deed and the Eumenides who crush him for doing it; though it is true that Æschylus, with the audacity of a partisan in a political crisis, figures that even out of this tangle there is a way of escape in the aristocratic Court of Areopagus. So in *Antigone*, we see humanity placed between two equal and opposite forces, loyalty to kindred and loyalty to the state: alike Kreon and Antigone are crushed. And the irony that saturates the whole

Sophoclean drama is the mockery of man in his attempts to unravel or to resist Destiny. Thus it is a religious, not a political, idea which is the basis of Greek tragedy. It is, no doubt, a splendid moment that opens Athenian history, with Marathon and the single-handed resistance to Oriental despotism; and splendid is the oratory and historical writing by which this Athenian era is illuminated for us. But we must not mistake between the illumination and the thing illuminated. Grote did good service in vindicating the Athenian democracy against the traditional disparagement that had been inspired by prejudice against democracy in general; yet, on an impartial review, the political history of Athens reveals the usual combination of evil and good, weakness and strength. The innovating spirit that comes in with Socrates and Euripides is not the decline of a lofty ideal, but the inevitable reaction against an artificial conception of things, a reaction in the direction of ideals more general, saner, more natural.

What then is the true conception of the Hellenic spirit? Hellenism, as I understand it, is the sudden, gigantic, well-nigh illimitable outflowering of human powers, alike creative and critical, but working upon a highly limited material. As art and literature, the productions of Greek genius reach unsurpassable greatness and stand in a class by themselves. But the permanent influence of Hellenism is at every point checked by its inherent limitations, limitations that are themselves largely the result of the sudden outgrowth.

The silent generations had accumulated a floating poetry of tradition and myth. Homer and the trage-

dians gave to this matter a literary splendor that fixed it as the permanent source of poetic material for the Greeks. For all the centuries from Homer to Virgil every attempt to travel outside this circle of poetic matter failed. This has given to universal literature one of its permanent effects — the echoing of the poetry of the past. But inevitably at last there comes exhaustion of material, and classical poetry passes into the sterile imitation and uninspired polish of a silver age. Again, the period of a single lifetime saw the rise from the folk play to the magnificent Attic tragedy. But this sudden rise of Greek tragedy imparted to it a fixity of form: connection with the chorus and limitation to a single final situation — mere accidents of its origin — became accepted as essential to the very conception of tragedy. Such stiffness of form militated against natural expansion; finally the Greek Drama of Situation became the Drama of Seneca, the rhetorical expansion of situations conventional or assumed. Greek religion was the naïve awe and delight in presence of nature which is the religion of the world's childhood; it inspired such poetry that the ideal is still dear to us, and a Schiller can sigh for the gods of Greece. But so limited a religion had nothing with which to satisfy the inevitably deepening life of the Greeks; which was thus left to the freezing influence of Destiny with its closed circle of thought, until religion died out in Greece except as popular superstition. Its place was taken by the philosophy of nature and of man. We are bewildered by the rapid succession of philosophical schools, each school a complete explana-

tion of the universe, elaborated with a subtilty that tasks our modern scholars even to follow. But these philosophies of the universe rest upon a basis of the narrowest observation; instruments of precision and experiment, which are the alphabet of modern philosophic research, have no existence; such philosophies find their natural end in the curiosity hunting of a Pliny. So with moral speculation. The limiting horizon of the autonomous city-state determines the whole point of view: the moral nature, with infinite subtilty, is analyzed as if a political constitution. Greek ethics is thus the philosophy of static man; society, or (with the Stoics) the universe, is brought in only as a sphere in which the individual may find exercise. There is no dynamic, no motive for progress, no reaction of the individual on his universe; to its latest conceptions in Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius virtue is the individual on his defence against the vanity of life. In the case of Greek art we have to take distinctions. Of the arts of sculpture and dancing the field is the human body: here the whole field is open to the Greeks, and they have exhausted the possibilities of these two arts, leaving the moderns only to imitate and modify. In architecture, the Greeks reached fulness of development for a single form, one consonant with their fixed open-air life; the more varied life of the ages that were to come have added to architecture more than the Greeks gave to it. The art of music is bound up with mechanism, which in the Hellenic period was yet in its infancy; here it is the Greeks who are the pygmies, and the moderns the giants.

Perhaps the most astonishing achievement of the Greeks is their criticism and logic or dialectic: these seem to spring up in a moment full grown. But the inevitable limitation comes in. Perhaps the Greek language is the most wonderful language the world has known: but it is also true that the Greeks knew no other language, and all other peoples were to them barbarians. Hence Greek criticism, while it is fundamental and final when it is regarded as analysis of Greek literature, yet falls short when brought to bear upon the literatures of the future; in historic fact Greek criticism has proved chiefly an incumbrance to the natural development of poetry. Further, to say that the Greeks knew no language but their own is to say that, ultimately, they must lack the power to grasp what language really is, to seize clearly the horizon between words and things. And this one limitation undermines the soundness of their whole profound and subtle dialectic. The dialogues of Plato are dramatizations of thought processes: as such they are the marvel of universal literature. As positive mental science, while the wisest of the moderns learns much from them, yet their authority breaks down continually by the confusion between things and the names of things; Greek logic gives us a genealogy of ideas rather than the relation between ideas and realities.

Rome presents a modified Hellenism. The one thing lacked by the Greeks is supplied by the Roman people: the instinct of political progression that can enlarge its conceptions gradually from the city-state to world empire, crystallizing all this institutional development in

law and jurisprudence. But again the fatal limitation comes in. When this Roman people reaches the point of literary adolescence, they surrender absolutely to Greece, and henceforward Roman culture follows Greek culture through its phases of strength and weakness. Accordingly, when the political genius of Rome has converted all civilization into a single empire, there is no national character to serve as soul of this world empire; Roman society undergoes the decay of infinite viciousness, until the new force of Christianity comes to the rescue.

Thus Hellenism in all its aspects presents the same appearance: colossal powers, with magnificent achievements, yet forever checked by limitations of the conditions amid which these powers are working. It is a totally false reading of history to say that Hellenism was overthrown by Christianity. The seeds of decay were in the ancient world itself, and Hellenism everywhere showed symptoms of exhaustion long before Christianity arose. The world we call modern had to make an entirely fresh start, under new conditions. Yet this modern world must forever reckon among its most priceless possessions the heritage of literature, art, and philosophy it has received from the ancient Greeks.

It is no less necessary to inquire, What is the essential spirit of Hebraism? I use this form of the word in order to emphasize that it is not the whole history and culture of the Hebrew people with which we are concerned, but only that element of it which is embodied in the literature we call the Bible. For we cannot insist too strongly upon the fact that the Bible is a literature.

One of the features of our age is a remarkable quickening of the historic spirit. Historic criticism, as in other fields, has worked upon the Bible: analyzing the text as it stands into component elements, assigning these component elements to various dates, and attempting chronological reconstruction. There has thus arisen a confusion in the popular mind, as if the Bible were being recast. Now, such historical analysis is legitimate and valuable in its own sphere: but this sphere is that of Semitic antiquities. It is a misnomer to call such studies biblical. If the Bible be taken to pieces, the component elements associated with particular historical surroundings, and the parts reconstructed in new sequence, the result so attained ceases to be the Bible, and becomes something quite different; a valuable exhibit, it may be, for the Semitic specialist, but of no bearing upon the history of civilization. What makes the groundwork of our modern religion is, not the history of Israel, but one particular interpretation of the history of Israel, a spiritual interpretation made once for all by the sacred writers, and embodied in the finished literature we call the Bible. To recast this Bible is as impossible as to reconstruct Homer, or rewrite Plato, or bring Shakespeare up to date. It is true that the full literary character of the Bible is hidden from most of its readers. There are two reasons for this. In the first place—as a later chapter will show more at length — most of us read the Bible in what are really mediæval versions, broken up by commentators of the Middle Ages into texts for comment; however accurate may be the translation of the words, the literary connection is lost. Again, this Bible

has been worked over by theology after theology, each with a different principle of interpretation: the theological interpretations are more familiar than the natural literary sense. It becomes necessary, avoiding theological formulations, to realize the content of Scripture simply read as literature.

In form, the Bible contains a framework of historic narrative that is no more than a framework, a connective tissue holding together higher literary forms — story, lyrics, drama, discourse, philosophic wisdom, epistolary exposition — which higher forms constitute the life and spirit of the whole. These higher forms are the Hebraic "classics," the survival of the spiritually fittest. They hold a position similar to that of Greek "classics," yet are so different in literary structure that they would be important, if for no other reason, as enlarging our conceptions of literary form. But, unlike their Hellenic counterparts, these Hebraic classics are further seen to draw together with a connectedness like the unity of a dramatic plot. The Bible thus presents a progression of things from first beginnings, in historic outline to the first Christian century, in spiritual vision to a consummation in an indefinite future. Our immediate question is, What are the ideas, the literary motives, holding together this dramatic progression?

First, in contrast with Greek literature, we note in the Bible the total absence of any suggestion of Destiny. Though, as we have seen, scriptural literature is a progression, its earlier conceptions widely sundered from the later, yet from first to last the supreme power of the universe is always conceived in the personal form —

God. The "work that God doeth from the beginning even unto the end" is not Destiny but Providence. It belongs to this freedom from any sense of Destiny that the Bible places its golden age always in the future, not in the past; there is moral inspiration in this vista of an endless progression that is always a progression upward. Of course, the supreme Power of the universe is presented as infinite; but the personal conception of Deity keeps this supreme Power always within the circle of human sympathies. At the same time there is the careful avoidance of anything that would make this human conception of Deity a limitation. In the first phase of Scripture, which we call the Law, the supreme sin is the sin of idolatry — the ascribing to Deity the likeness of anything in the heaven above, in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth; the New Testament lays down as a foundation thought that God is spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth. Thus the biblical conception of Deity can never be outgrown: as man enlarges, his conception of God enlarges with him. It is a conception that is anthropomorphic only in the same sense and for the same reason that the sky must appear to us spherical and the horizon circular. With the expansion of man's vision comes the expansion of his horizon, that is God.

With the idea of God another idea is kept side by side throughout the Bible: the communion between humanity and Deity. The characteristic word of the Bible is "covenant," the expression of the relationship between man and God. The Bible is a succession of covenants. The Old Covenant, or Old Testament, is the covenantal

relation between God and the People of Israel; the New Covenant — which makes its first appearance in the book of Jeremiah — the covenantal relationship between God and all individuals in whose hearts and inward parts this new covenant is written. The lyrics of the Old Testament voice the most intimate communion between man and God. In the New Testament the two have met. Whatever theology may formulate as to the person of Jesus Christ, the spirit of the New Testament is the meeting point of humanity and Deity. It is impossible to read the Fatherhood of God as a mere metaphor. And what pervades the whole New Testament is by the fourth gospel carried to a climax: in its mystic phraseology — "I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you" — the dividing line between humanity and Deity has disappeared. Furthermore, as with the passage from the Old Testament to the New, if not before, the idea of immortality has come in, and this a personal, individual immortality, the communion between man and God is projected beyond the grave to an infinite future.

With such ideas of man and God as its basis, the Bible presents a progression of things from first beginnings to a final consummation in a visionary future. What are the leading motives in this dramatic progression? They are two, that unite to make a third. The first may be described as Passionate Righteousness. Righteousness, of course, is a basic idea in all the world's great systems of thought. But Righteousness in the Bible becomes an enthusiasm, inspiring the same ecstasy that elsewhere is inspired by nature joys, by love, by vengeance. In the earlier phase of Scripture, which we call

the Law, righteousness appears chiefly as a restraining force, a holiness which separates from what is around. It is with the prophets that Righteousness becomes passionate, alike in its indignation against evil, and its glorying in the vindication of right. The second biblical motive is Love. It breathes through the lyrics of the Old Testament; as the New Testament progresses, love becomes more and more the supreme attribute even of Deity itself. It is not the love that is self-centred, desiring what is external for its own gratification; but a love that goes outwards, a yearning that by its own force flows over everything around, until it can hold it in a universal embrace.

These two motives combine to make a third. From first to last the Bible, in no uncertain terms, recognizes the evil that is in the world: in the presence of evil Righteousness and Love unite to make the supreme motive of Redemption. This word we are so accustomed to associate with theology, and its philosophical schemes of salvation, that it needs a purely literary reading of Scripture to realize that Redemption is of all conceptions the most poetic. The prophetic rhapsodies read like the day dreams of the spiritual life; the most exuberant and delicate poetic imagery is poured forth over the recovery of the world from its moral chaos, its conquest not by war but by agencies gentle as the light. The supreme personality of prophetic vision announces his mission as that of preaching good tidings to the meek, binding up the brokenhearted, bringing liberty to the captives, bringing the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. It is this very

passage of the Isaiahan Rhapsody which the Jesus of the New Testament makes the announcement of his own mission; the gospels describe this work of healing and redemption, and in the vision of the Transfiguration present the Law and the Prophets as doing it homage. And the final vision of all time in which the whole Bible culminates presents the figure of the Redeemer as supreme over all other authority, while all history is to be summed up as the kingdom of the world becoming the kingdom of this Christ.

To come back to our main argument: it is the ancient literatures which are inspired by this Hellenic and this Hebraic spirit that have been the ancestral literatures of our modern English culture. Yet it is manifest that this statement will not of itself suffice for the literary pedigree of the English-speaking peoples. A third factor has to be recognized, only less important than the first two. It is a factor much more difficult to state: we have in this case, not distinct ancestral literatures, but a complex of many forces working together. Nor is there any generally accepted term by which these are known. I will adopt the expression Mediævalism and Romance: Mediævalism to describe the historic conditions; Romance, the literary aspect of the result. And to realize clearly this third factor of our pedigree, it will be necessary to summarize the history of the Middle Ages, the period of gestation for the forces with which we are concerned. I fear that to some of my readers I shall seem to be reciting very elementary historic facts. But in a case like this it is

the elementary facts that constitute the difficulty: in dealing with so vast and so vaguely known a period as the Middle Ages it needs some resolution to keep the semi-relevant details from obscuring the essential outline.

I. The Middle Ages should not be understood as a chronological term, measurable in centuries; it is the expression of the transition from Roman to modern civilization. The Roman Empire, which is our starting point, was an Hellenic civilization centring around the Mediterranean: the name of this sea becomes highly significant in this connection. On the east of the Roman Empire we have the remnant of the great Persian Empire, the last but one of the world powers. To the same region belong, what are important for coming movements, the Semitic civilizations of the Arabs and the Jews. To the west of the Roman Empire lies the region of the barbarian peoples, raw material for the Europe of the future. It is simply bewildering to enumerate the separate races, which indeed have importance only in their amalgamation. We may perhaps think of them as falling into two classes, which may be described by the terms "Germanic" and "Migratory." Germanic is not here used as a strict ethnological term, but a number of allied stocks may be signified by what was destined to be their dominant element. All barbarian races were migratory. But those of the Germanic order migrated only in the sense of gravitating to their permanent seats. Other races — Slavs, Huns, eventually Turks — appear in European history as migratory in another sense: like sudden floods they descend at intervals upon the

comparatively settled society of Europe, making epochs of disturbance and shock, until they at last find a place in the European system.

II. The first onward stage from our starting-point is that, slowly but surely, this Roman Empire becomes Christianized. In its total significance this of course implies that Hebraic culture gradually pervades Hellenic. But of this wide revolution a single aspect has for us specific importance. As part of the institutions of Christianity we have the rise of the clergy, an order which is intellectual but not hereditary. As non-hereditary, the order of the clergy becomes a recruiting ground for talent of all kinds; from the lowest ranks of society, and even from among slaves, individuals can by this means pass to the highest positions of influence. As an intellectual order, the clergy make the channels by which culture is conveyed from the centre to every part of the vast whole. The secular clergy bring the religious ideas of which Rome is the centre to every hamlet and every hearth, and keep them in evidence through each season of the changing year. Later on, the monastic clergy, dissociated from local ties, become the special instrument by which the Pope in Rome maintains his hold upon all Christendom: the Dominicans and Franciscans are his ecclesiastical knighthood, the mendicant friars his guerilla forces. More than anything else it is the order of the clergy that makes the bridge by which Roman culture is transported to future ages. The Middle Ages may almost be summed up as the transition of the Roman Empire into the Roman Church.

III. We pass now into a period marked by the struggle for existence of the Roman Empire in conflict with barbarian races. The struggle becomes a drawn battle. The material side of civilization passes more and more into the hands of the barbarians; new and vigorous races control government, yet, as they settle into organized life, become tinctured with the civilization they have conquered. On the other hand, mental culture is retained by Rome through its clergy. From this time onward we find a monastic monopoly of learning. And the word "learning" must not deceive us: education down to its very elements is confined to the clergy. This is brought home to our imagination by a curious survival from this era into the far future — the "benefit of clergy," or right of the clergy to be tried by their own courts, the test of such clerical status being the power to read a book: a survival pointing to the time when the reading, which we consider the first step in education, was of itself sufficient to constitute membership in the clerical profession. In this period, moreover, of struggle and continual war, not only is education confined to the non-combatant clergy, but what culture there is undergoes a great shrinkage: we have the "Dark Ages." The Hellenic learning that has descended from the Roman Empire becomes contracted to a minimum, and that minimum becomes adulterated with ecclesiastical limitations; mathematics tends to be little more than the "computus" or mode of determining the date of Easter, and history is dwarfed to the monastic chronicle. What is stranger still, Hebraic culture

undergoes a similar shrinkage. So far as Christianity is a theology, its foundation doctrines are emphasized by the mediæval church and made prevalent. But if we regard Christianity as the religion of the Bible, resting therefore upon the basis of a rich and varied literature, we seek in vain for such biblical culture in the Dark Ages. To how small a point it has shrunk we may best realize by noting what appears long afterwards, when Europe has advanced from the Dark Ages to the verge of the Renaissance. We find a Martin Luther — already a university man, nearing his Bachelor's degree, and exceptionally inclined to religious studies — as he rummages among books in the university library, coming by accident for the first time upon a copy of the Bible, and finding with amazement that it is a whole literature, and not merely the fragments of gospels and epistles read in the services of the Church: the shock of surprise altered his whole life. And another of the reformers, Carlstadt, tells us that he was a Doctor of Theology in the University of Wittenberg before he had ever read the Scriptures. The Dark Ages involve a loss of knowledge just as much as the confinement of knowledge to a single class.

IV. From the Dark Ages we pass to the climax of "The Holy Roman Empire." The Middle Ages must no longer be described by negative terms; they have attained a characteristic individuality that distinguishes a great period in universal history. In other epochs of European history we have to do with various races and peoples: in the Middle Ages European civilization conceives of itself as a single unity, at once a Church

and a State. Its one aspect is the Holy Catholic Church; the other is the Holy Roman Empire. The drawn battle between Rome and barbarism, by which the new races have won material power and Rome has conquered in the spiritual world, here stands fully displayed; it is some German potentate who represents the outward authority of Rome, a Pope in Rome itself who sways all Christendom in things of the spirit. And the one is as "holy" as the other: as the soul cannot operate except through the body, and the body is dead without the soul, so Emperor and Pope may be forever struggling for predominance, but neither can exist without the other. A conception like this is the passionate faith of great mediæval thinkers like Dante; it no less plays its part in the practical politics of the least imaginative rulers and statesmen.

If from this general conception we descend to analysis, we find three elements side by side in this dominant phase of mediæval history. We have the Catholic Church: the whole of civilization appears as a single spiritual body, with the Pope in Rome as the brain, and the clergy as the ramified system of nerves by which he communicates with the corporate whole. The second element is the Feudal System. Instead of natural divisions of mankind, like races and nations, we find shifting political units — the feudal tenures. The principle of feudalism is the combination of two things: the tenure of land by military service to a superior, and the hereditary principle. Each feudal chief, in the spirit of the parable, is a man under authority, having authorities under him: supreme in the

administration of his own realm, he yet has allegiance to powers above him, until the hierarchy ends in the ideal Emperor. The accidents that go with the hereditary principle — failure of heirs, intermarriage, to say nothing of violent action and war — keep these units of government forever shifting, and the map of Europe changes from day to day. To these two a third element must be added, prominent not so much at the time as in the light of the future. The common Roman language, acting upon various local modes of speech, begins to form varying languages; where Latin is stronger than local linguistic influence, we have Romance languages, Italian, French, Spanish; where the local speech is the stronger of the two, we get Germanic languages, such as English or German. Language is the main basis of nationality; and thus in the heart of the Middle Ages, with its unity of European civilization, are being gradually prepared the political units of the future, the great nations of Europe.

V. Thus the original Roman Empire had drawn the barbarian west into itself, and moulded the whole into an imperial and ecclesiastical unity. Meanwhile, a strangely parallel movement had been going on upon the other side of the Mediterranean. In the far East another Semitic people had suddenly risen to be a world power; the Arabs, inspired by the powerful individuality of Mahomet, had produced a new religion, a perverted Hebraism. Appealing as this religion does to the more facile side of the moral nature, it had spread like wild-fire through regions of Indian, Persian, Greek, African civilization, until from Babylon to the

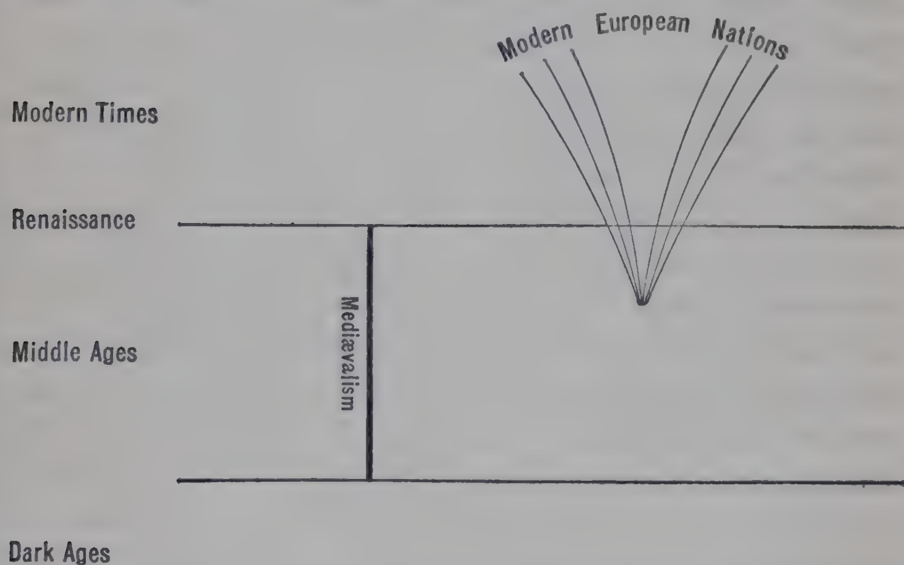
Atlantic coast of Africa Islam stood up to confront Christendom. Mohammedan civilization, like Christian, exhibits the blending of Semitic and Aryan culture; not only the seats of oriental learning, but Alexandria itself, centre of Greek literature and science, had been swept into the Mohammedan world. The parallel must be carried a step further. On the European side, of all binding forces the most potent was the Latin language, sole language alike of religion and education, the circulating medium for ideas from end to end of Christendom. In precisely the same way, the Arabic was the sole official language of the Mohammedan world: in this medium alone Indian, Persian, Greek wisdom could find currency. This has an important bearing upon future history. The Arabians of the Middle Ages had (so to speak) the main carrying trade in ideas, but they brought nothing of their own to the civilization of the future. Arabians gave a great impulse to mediæval philosophy; but they did this with translations of Aristotle. Arabians were the leading scientists of the Middle Ages, especially in the science of medicine, with the great names of Averroës and Avicenna; but the enormous medical literature in Arabic is a second-hand literature, and, except for small advances in pharmacopœia, Greek medical art lost, rather than gained, in the hands of the Arabs. They gave an Arabic name to "Algebra": but on their own showing it was a Greek science they were expounding. Most important of all: the Arabic notation seems to us the indispensable foundation of all mathematics, and through mathematics of all exact science. But

the one thing certain about the Arabic notation is that it was not Arabic. In the form in which the Arabians conveyed it to Europe they had learned it from Indian philosophers; but it is still a moot question whether the essentials of the Arabic notation had not been established centuries earlier than this in the Greek Alexandria. In spite of the brilliant mediæval career of Arabic learning the roots of our civilization remain Hellenic and Hebraic.

VI. It was inevitable that sooner or later the West and the East, Christianity and Islam, should clash. By what seems one of the accidents of history, the Arabs — or, as they are then called, the Saracens — had been able to secure a strong foothold in the Spanish peninsula of Europe. From this as a base in the eighth century they make their advances. Europe concentrates its full strength to oppose them under the leadership of Charles Martel; and in the great Battle of Tours — as decisive a world crisis as Marathon — it is settled forever that there shall be no Mohammedan domination of Europe. Three centuries afterwards we have, so to speak, the return match. In the succession of expeditions known as the Crusades all Europe put its strength into the invasion of the Saracenic world. Christendom proved as powerless to subdue Islam as Islam had been powerless to defeat European Christendom. Meanwhile, these clashes of East and West had served as the great tides of the mediæval ocean. Each civilization had been strained to its highest bent in conflict with the other. In Europe, more particularly, the constituent parts of the whole

by events like these had been shaken together; by the Crusades Europe was brought to a knowledge of itself.

VII. With these elements of mediæval history as a basis, we are now in a position to take a survey of mediæval culture. But here a distinction must be made, if our survey is to escape being burdened with a great deal of what, however important in itself, is not strictly relevant to our present purpose. I have used the term "Middle Ages," not as a chronological term, but as the description of a transition. If we simply take the centuries that intervene between the Roman



Empire and the Renaissance, and analyze the literary and philosophical content of these centuries, a considerable proportion of what we encounter has its true relevance not so much to contemporary history as to the future. We have seen that in the midst of the

European unity which is the essential distinction of the Middle Ages we have also the gradual evolution, by slow linguistic divergence, of what are hereafter to be the nations of Europe. The literary movements and literary product of the mediæval centuries belong in a very considerable degree to the separate history of the individual European peoples. We are here concerned only with that part of the whole which, in a strict sense, constitutes mediævalism.

1. The foremost element of mediæval culture is that which is expressed by the picturesque yet appropriate name of Gothic Architecture. This has, of course, developmental connection with previous art — Greek, Byzantine, Saracenic; yet it is strongly original, and seems to us to breathe the very soul of the centuries that produced it. It stands as the supremely great contribution of the Middle Ages to the culture of the world.

2. We may notice, next, the purely ecclesiastical literature. The Christian Fathers make a library in themselves, not only indispensable to the theologian and ecclesiastical historian, but holding a place of their own in philosophy. With these may be placed the grand Latin Hymns of the Church. Several of these in modern versions are still a part of Christian worship. Yet this seems to be a branch of poetry which less than most lends itself to translation. The Latin of these hymns has a rhythmic ring as far removed from classical Latin as it is difficult to convey into modern languages. They are, moreover, strong with the simplicity that seems never to come after the early stages of poetry.

In the feeling of no few readers, the Hymn as a poetic type has in these outpourings of the early Church reached its highest point.

3. Mediæval Science has already been mentioned, and is the least important product of its era. What science the Greeks bequeathed to future ages appears here diluted by Arabic and Latin translations, and still further limited by the ecclesiastical uses to which it was put. Medical practice figured largely in the Middle Ages, but medical theory was almost stationary.

4. Of much greater importance is the philosophy of the Middle Ages, known by the name of Scholasticism, or Doctrine of the Schools. This forms a distinct chapter of Universal Philosophy; one that must always be read with the deepest respect for the mental strength and infinite subtilty that it displays. But it is a portion of philosophy which stands entirely apart by itself. As philosophy is understood elsewhere, it cannot exist in the atmosphere of authority. But Scholasticism is a reasoned attempt to harmonize these two incompatible things, and to reach ecclesiastical dogma by logical methods. Hellenic systems of dialectic are applied to Hebraic truths as laid down by ecclesiastical authority. The conclusion is first assumed, and then the argument may wander until it finds it; or indeed there is yet another alternative, the position that something may be true in logic and yet false in faith. As it appears to me, a somewhat false conception of Scholasticism is made current by the way in which our histories of philosophy confine their notice of it to the Nominalist and Realist controversy,

or at least to the works of the great scholastic doctors, Anselm, Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus. No doubt this is the portion of scholastic literature most interesting to the philosophic thinker. But we must remember that the general character of mediæval life involved, alike in poetry and philosophy, a return in some measure to floating literature; written literature continued, but around it there played a transitory literature, vastly greater in extent, which was purely oral. In philosophy, this oral literature was the debate: the interminable public discussion in which doctor encountered doctor before an excited audience. In such debates the activity of the Schoolmen found its main expression; the written works of the leaders of Scholasticism were a small part of the whole. Thus the main influence of Scholasticism in the history of thought is that it shifted the emphasis in philosophy from investigation or exposition to disputation. The combative instinct became a disturbing force to logical sequence. The continuity of the treatise or lecture gave place to the series of numbered propositions — like the ninety or hundred theses with which Luther and Eck contended — each brief proposition a clenched fist of challenge to dispute; a change closely analogous to that other mediæval change by which the literary continuity of Scripture was broken up into numbered texts for comment. It was this aspect of Scholasticism which impressed the men of the modern type of mind who came nearest to it, men like Erasmus and Bacon. What Erasmus says must of course be read as humorous satire.

They fence themselves in with so many surrounders of magisterial definitions, conclusions, corollaries, propositions explicit and implicit, that there is no falling in with them; or if they do chance to be urged to a seeming nonplus, yet they find out so many evasions, that all the art of man can never bind them so fast, but that an easy distinction shall give them a starting-hole to escape the scandal of being baffled. They will cut asunder the toughest argument with as much ease as Alexander did the Gordian Knot. . . . They have yet far greater difficulties behind, which, notwithstanding, they solve with as much expedition as the former, as . . . whether this proposition is possible to be true, the first person of the Trinity hated the second? Whether God, who took our nature on him in the form of a man, could as well have become a woman, a devil, a beast, a herb, or a stone? and were it so possible that the Godhead had appeared in any shape of an inanimate substance, how he should then have preached his gospel? or how have been nailed to the cross? . . . There are a thousand other more sublimated and refined niceties of notions, relations, quantities, formalities, quiddities, hæccities, and such like abstrusities, as one would think no one could pry into, unless he had not only such cat's eyes as to see best in the dark, but even such a piercing faculty as to see through an inch board, and spy out what really never had any being.[1]

But Bacon's criticism is sober analysis: —

. . . the manner or method of handling a knowledge, which among them was this; upon every particular position or assertion to frame objections, and to those objections, solutions; which solutions were for the most part not confutations, but distinctions: whereas indeed the strength of all sciences is, as the strength of the old man's faggot, in the bond. For the harmony of a science, supporting each part the other, is and ought to be the true and brief confutation and suppression of all the smaller sort of objections. But, on the other side, if you take out every axiom, as the sticks of the faggot, one by one, you may quarrel with them and bend and break them at your

[1] Erasmus: *Praise of Folly.*

> pleasure. . . . And such is their method, that rests not so much upon evidence of truth proved by arguments, authorities, similitudes, examples, as upon particular confutations and solutions of every scruple, cavillation, and objection, breeding for the most part one question as fast as it solveth another.[1]

Upon both Erasmus and Bacon we see that Scholasticism impresses itself as a vitiation of philosophic method: the natural perspective of investigation or exposition lost in the perspective of debate.

5. Mediæval literature includes a body of Religious Epic Poetry: of legends, miracles, lives of saints. This pervaded the centuries as a floating literature; it is best known to us in the collection of these stories, roughly associated with the successive parts of the ecclesiastical year, under the name of *The Golden Legend*. This *Golden Legend* of course is not an epic poem, but it may be regarded as a cycle of epic poetry. These stories of the saints, more than anything else, bring us into close touch with the pulsating everyday life of the Middle Ages. It would be a shallow criticism that would regard these as the product of credulity. Credulity is a negative that cannot create: these golden legends are filled with creative reality. It is at this point that mediævalism is in sharpest contrast with the spirit of the present age. The objective material world, so clear cut to us as seen in the light of science, was dim to the men of the Dark Ages. Theirs was the inward vision, the eye opened to the spiritual world interpenetrating the life of ordinary experience: a palpable spiritual realm filled with

[1] Bacon: *Advancement of Learning.*

hierarchies of superhuman powers, fighting on opposite sides in the battle of salvation. In such a world miracle becomes the ordinary course of things; the measure of probability is the stimulus each incident gives to faith. If the sense of wonder is present at all, it is present only as the salt to the food of devotion.

6. To Mediæval Religious Epic must be added Mediæval Religious Drama. The whole spirit of public worship was dramatic, and the mass was the daily presentation of miracle. In time, complete dramatic scenes were evolved with an independent interest of their own: the Miracle Play, in which the plot was an incident of sacred history; the Morality, in which the plot was latent in the allegorical personages represented. It is well known how the Miracle Play and Morality became further and further dissociated from their ecclesiastical origin; the use of realistic details as a mode of vivification introduced a spirit of secularization, and the mediæval drama was at last brought, through the Interlude, to the very verge of the modern play. But there is a more deep-seated influence than this of mediæval drama in literary history. The Ancient Classical Drama was the Drama of Situation: however much its successive phases might vary, it retained from first to last a fixity of form — the suggestion of a whole story through the actual presentation of only a single situation. The effect of the mediæval drama was to shift the dramatic emphasis from situation to incident; in the earlier Miracle Plays to a single incident, in the Collective Miracle Play to a series of incidents covering the whole of sacred history. In this way the

mediæval drama became a transition stage to the coming Romantic Drama with its presentation of whole stories.

VIII. Yet all that has so far been enumerated constitutes the less significant aspects of mediævalism. The most important product of the Middle Ages, at least from the standpoint of the present discussion, is the grand popular imaginative literature ultimately to be known by the name of "Romance." From the very beginning of modern literary history a leading question has been the Origin of Romance. But the older theories fell into the error of seeking single causes for this vast literary phenomenon. The real source of Romance is the constitution of the Middle Ages as a whole.

The Middle Ages constitute a vast gathering ground of poetic material for fusion and intermingling; for poetic use at the time, and as foundation for the poetry of the future. Europe at this period was possessed by a sense of unity, never possible before or in the future. Diversity of language, the greatest of dividing forces, was then at its minimum; nationality was only beginning its process of formation; the consciousness of unity, inherited from the Roman Empire, was emphasized by unity of religion, and brought home to daily life by uniformity of worship; there was one single educated class, speaking a single language of education. We may say that the very stratification of society tended in the same direction. With us, the divisions of society are (so to speak) vertical; the higher and lower classes of the same nation are more closely in

sympathy with one another than with corresponding ranks abroad. In the Middle Ages the stratification was horizontal: the knights formed a freemasonry all over Europe; the populace everywhere had the same troubles and the same clergy to voice them; everywhere the towns had the same practical problems and the same modes of meeting them. For such a European community a circulating medium of ideas was found in the various wandering classes: the wandering minstrels, the wandering scholars, the wandering friars and palmers, the wandering merchants. Finally, great movements like the Crusades brought, not professional armies, but great bodies of the people, down even in one case to children, from all regions into actual personal contact.

Of what nature were the poetic materials brought together by this unification of Europe? In the first place, we have the original folklore of the races thus intermingling: English folklore and German; Celtic lore, with the delicate fairy tracery of Irish imagination; Norse heroic saga, in its poetic potentiality the peer of Greek epic; all the accumulations of Oriental nations, brought into Europe by the Arabs; these, in addition to what remained of Hellenic story, especially Greek novels, and the story wealth of the Bible, with traditions of miracle and martyrdom that had gathered round it. But in addition to all this there are special poetic motives generated by mediæval life itself. Of these, the most prominent is Chivalry. The feudal system multiplied courts, and "courts" (as Spenser has said) are the root of "courtesy"; of

the gay science (we may add), and what has been called "the metaphysics of love"; all this the secular product of that Germanic instinct which in religion added Mariolatry to biblical Christianity. Again, we have Allegory and Mysticism: this is to be found in all ages of literature, but we may look for it in special force where we have an educated class excluded from the dominant interests of war and love, except so far as these can appear in symbolic forms. The interest of Marvels and Wonderland is a universal interest; but it will be accentuated in an age of travel and wandering life. And we must add the special interest of Magic. Magic of some kind belongs to widely different eras, witness the Thessalian Witch and the Witch of Endor: it was the dominating reality of mediæval life. Gustave Doré's picture of the Triumph of Christianity represents the Messiah and his angels driving before them into the pit of hell figures easily recognizable as the gods of Greek or Oriental religions. This exactly reproduces the historic fact: the Christianization of the barbarian peoples was, not the extinction, but the conquest of heathendom, the gods of the old religions becoming the demons of the new. Thus was provided in mediæval thought a whole apparatus of supernatural powers, warring in the fight of good against evil; the "White Magic" of the miracle-working Church was pitted against the "Black Magic" of wonders wrought by demonic powers for the price of human souls. Or, if any nature powers were of too neutral a character to have place in the contest of good and evil, the Rosicrucian Magic presented these as

elemental beings of earth, air, fire, water. Chivalry, Allegory, Wonderland, Magic — these together make an atmosphere favorable to the most prolific invention of imaginative poetry, to be added to the rich imaginative stores inherited from earlier ages.

We have thus a limitless variety of poetic materials and a common field on which they may unite. The free intermingling and fusion of these varieties is further favored by two circumstances. One is that in the Middle Ages we have a partial reversion to the conditions of floating literature. Oral literature preponderates over written; hearers ready to listen are universal, reading is the special function of a professional class. It is obvious that writing tends to fixity in literature; oral poetry, free to vary with every recitation, makes a floating medium in which the most varied elements can come together, and gradually feel their way to amalgamation. To this it must be added, that all through the period under discussion the limiting influence of criticism was in abeyance. In Greek literature creative poetry and criticism sprang up simultaneously; not of course the systematized criticism of an Aristotle, but that unconscious criticism of the public mind which favors fixity of form and literary conservatism; such critical sense as kept tragedy and comedy distinct at Athens, limited dramatic structure by unity of scene, or even resented any enlargement by Euripides of dramatic practice followed by Sophocles. There is not a trace of such critical stiffness in mediæval poetry. The tragic and the comic may mingle as freely as they do in actual life. Even the sharp line that

divides story from history has been lost: the historic chronicle is filled in with imaginative details by a trouvère, and becomes history to a future chronicler.

In this way it is the general condition of things we call "Mediævalism" that brings about the literary product which comes to be called "Romance." The name seems natural in an age of which a leading phenomenon is the breaking up of the dominant Roman language into a number of allied languages the larger part of which go by the name of "Romance" languages. The essential character of this Romantic poetry is the amalgamation of the literary riches of many races in a product that becomes infinitely richer as it amalgamates. Such Romance becomes something of a World Literature in itself, as we follow adventures of Charlemagne's Peers that involve episodes in Ireland or Sicily, the speakers in these incidents citing parallels from legends of Troy or Thebes, with references to Russia and Lithuania, while at times Christian hermits have to work miracles that may counteract the magic power of a Proteus, or Venus, or Osiris. The supreme creative power that can produce the Greek masterpieces carries with it, as its shadow, critical limitations; these powers and limitations may well be in abeyance for a few centuries while new veins of poetic matter are being worked, to supplement the exhausted material of classical poetry. Or, if we go no further than the elementary consideration of quantity, the *mass* of Romance has its significance as a counterpoise, in the European mind, to the overpowering authority of the classical models soon to be recovered.

IX. The movement which terminates the Middle Ages and ushers in our modern times is known as the Renaissance. Great is the power of the metaphors hidden in words: it has become a matter of dispute in what sense this movement is a "new birth." Some have been willing to recognize only a sudden movement, dated from the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in A.D. 1453, which produced an exodus of Greek scholars westward, bringing to Europe as a whole both the classical literature itself and the classical scholarship that could interpret it. But to take this view is to ignore the steady advance towards the constitution of the modern world which had been made all through the latter part of the Middle Ages. Others have made the birth of the modern world consist in the recovery, whether gradual or sudden, of classical thought and art: this ignores the immense contribution made by the Middle Ages to modernism, a contribution including Christianity itself. The fundamental principle of this work is that modern civilization rests upon the union of the Hellenic and Hebraic factors. The Middle Ages had added Christianity to Hellenism, but (as we have seen) both biblical and classical literatures were known in an imperfect and distorted form; the Renaissance from our point of view is the recovery of Hellenic and Hebraic culture in their completeness. Thus the movement is twofold; and each half carries with it what is a spurious counterpart of itself. In the first place, we have the complete recovery of classical literature and art; classical manuscripts replace the mediæval translations and perversions, and a classical scholar-

ship is formed by the study of these, while in poetry an era of translation makes an apprenticeship of modern poets to Greek masters. This is the Renaissance Proper. But in its earlier stages there goes with it the Pseudo-Hellenism of the age of the Medici: in religion a recrudescence of paganism, in art a blind worship of what is classical, all other types ignored as "gothic" barbarity. The other half of the Renaissance is what is usually called the Reformation. We now have Hebraic literature recovered in its fulness: the manuscripts brought into western Europe include the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures; the scholarship of a Budæus and an Erasmus is applied to their elucidation; when the results of this have had time to reach the general mind, the great religious movement supervenes which brings back Christianity to its foundation upon the Bible as a whole. But the Reformation in its later stages brings the Pseudo-Hebraism that makes Puritanism. The translated Bible has reached the whole people; it is a complete Scripture, but Scripture broken by mediæval doctors into texts by which all literary continuity is lost. Melancthon's ideal also is lost, that learning should be the bulwark to religion against enthusiasm. The words and phrases of Scripture, and its mere surface meanings divorced from literary or historic setting, are seized upon by a religious earnestness that mistakes the fervor of novelty for spiritual inspiration; faith and culture are divorced, and tumultuous religious warfare supersedes the sanity of devotion. It is only when this fever of distorted Hebraism has worn itself out that the biblical element

can be recognized in its true influence on the formation of the modern world.

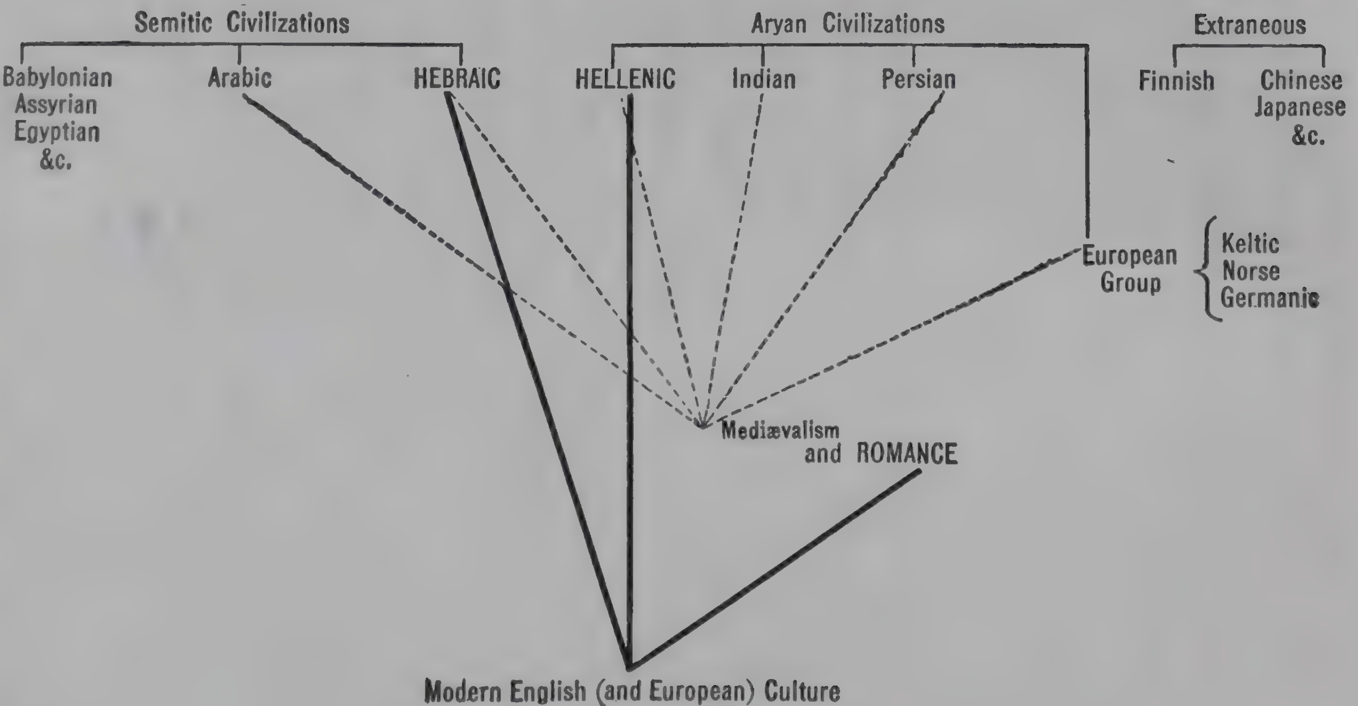
X. Thus Modern Culture, the point up to which this discussion has led, may be summed up as a New Thought, a New Poetry, a New Religion, and a New Art. A New Thought: we have a fresh start of science and philosophy from the point at which the Greeks left off. But the intervening period has produced two inventions which have revolutionized thinking. The silent, unheralded, almost unperceived rise of scientific experimentation, not only has restored observation as the essential basis of science and philosophy, but further serves to carry this observation direct to the crucial points at which truth is likely to be found. The more obvious invention of printing perpetuates and distributes records: the ancient conception of philosophy, which leads each thinker to attempt a complete explanation of all things, gives place to the New Thought, in which observers and thinkers of all races and generations gradually resolve into a coöperation for the advance of truth, as limitless as the human race itself. We have again a New Poetry: the combined influences of Mediævalism and Hellenism give to modern literature its fundamental antithesis of Romantic and Classical. These are the centripetal and centrifugal forces of creative literature: the Classical impulse is towards echoing the poetry of the past, ministering to an established sense of form, recalling creative details already dear to the imagination in ever new kaleidoscopic variations; the Romantic impulse is towards novelty, free invention and

surprise. The mutual play of these antithetic tendencies keeps poetry in wholesome equilibrium. And there is a sense in which a New Religion distinguishes the modern world. It will have its Protestantism and Catholicism, its religions of authority, its rationalistic, mystical, or agnostic systems. But all alike will differ from what has gone before by their free play of religious thought, in which authority itself must be a voluntarily accepted authority. And they will all rest upon an Hebraic basis: to whatever limit their final conclusions may be carried, the only possible starting-point for modern religions will be the moral and spiritual conceptions of which the Bible is the literary monument. In a somewhat different sense we may speak, finally, of a New Art for the modern world. The other arts have come to us by a continuous development, quickened no doubt by the Renaissance; but the special art of the modern world is the art of music. It has its roots in the ecclesiastical worship of the mediæval church and the folk songs of European peoples. But the backbone of musical art is the orchestra, in which of course human voices find a place as one type of instruments. Now the orchestra is inseparably bound up with mechanical invention, the great achievement of modern times. Each invention of a musical instrument, or enlargement of the power of an existing instrument, means an enlargement of musical thought; the enlarging musical thought in its turn calls for enlarged instrumental technique, until what leaders of music in Beethoven's day pronounced impossible, has become easy to our modern players.

Music thus becomes the most progressive of the fine arts. And it is music which has placed the modern world on a par artistically with the greatest ages of the past. A symphony of Beethoven or Tschaikowsky, rendered by one of the half-dozen supremely equipped orchestras of our own day, is as colossal an artistic achievement as a statue by Phidias or Cologne Cathedral.

These seem to be the historic considerations that determine the descent of our modern English culture from influences of antiquity, and its varied relationship with the culture of other peoples. We recognize two ultimate factors: ancestral literatures, completed and belonging to the far past. A third factor is the complex of historic conditions and literary relationships constituting Mediævalism, in its literary aspect Romance; into this Mediævalism the primitive English literature passed, along with the primitive literatures of allied European races, and in this way entered into associations with the culture of various peoples, ancient and modern. The original chart, with which (on page 12) we sought to indicate the relationship of English civilization to the main civilizations of the world, needs to be modified in order to give its proper place to this new factor of Mediævalism and Romance. As so modified (page 52), it may stand for the Literary Pedigree of the English-speaking Peoples, bringing out, in all that has a bearing upon literature, our nearer or more remote relationship to the rest of the world. It thus satisfies one of the two conditions necessary for forming our conception of World Litera-

LITERARY PEDIGREE OF THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING PEOPLES



ture. The other condition is that intrinsic literary value shall have its full recognition, by which particular portions of literature may be brought from most distant historic relationship into the foreground of our literary perspective.

III

WORLD LITERATURE FROM THE ENGLISH POINT OF VIEW

All that has been attempted so far has been preliminary. The purpose of this work is the practical realization of World Literature from the English point of view: actual selection of literature entering into this conception, and a grasp of the spirit in which such literature is to be approached. It is manifestly an assistance towards this purpose to have at the start something like a map of literature as a whole; only a small part of this whole can be compassed, yet at least the instinct of choice is provided with a sense of direction in which to move.

As a step in the solution of our problem I wish, borrowing a term from religious phraseology, to speak of Literary Bibles. The great religions of the world rest each on its sacred books; it seems not improper to extend a word familiar in this connection to collections of works holding a somewhat analogous position in the purely literary field. In its full conception, the word "bible" combines wide range of literature with high significance of matter and some sense of literary unity; it further suggests a process of selection already accom-

plished by evolution, a survival of the spiritually fittest. Viewing universal literature from our English standpoint, it appears to me that five such Literary Bibles may be recognized. The first is of course the Holy Bible: this comprehends in its completeness one out of our two ancestral literatures. For the other ancestral literature, the Hellenic, we may, I think, make an approach to such representation — but only an approach — by a particular combination of Classical Epic and Tragedy, a combination which will give us a unity, and will include the Classical literature which has most powerfully influenced the poetry of succeeding ages. Again, from the English point of view, the unique position held by Shakespeare suggests a third Literary Bible. We may attain a fourth if we place side by side, as two elements of an antithesis, the *Divine Comedy* of Dante and the *Paradise Lost* of Milton — the supreme expression, respectively, of Mediæval Catholicism and Renaissance Protestantism. Once more, it is interesting to note how the Story of Faust, welling up from the fountain of mediæval legend, has attracted the highest minds of the modern world, leading to successive literary presentations of the same theme varied in their poetic dress, and still more contrasted in the underlying philosophy; these Versions of the Faust Story will constitute a fifth Literary Bible. These five Literary Bibles put together will in themselves make a nucleus of World Literature. They will be the subject of the five chapters that immediately follow.[1]

[1] Mr. Denton J. Snider, in an organization known as the St. Louis (subsequently the Chicago) Literary School, used to deal with

Our chart of literary pedigree distinguishes between those elements of universal literature which enter directly into our literary evolution, and those which bear to it a more remote relationship, or are altogether extraneous. The five Literary Bibles just suggested are concerned with the first class; what portions of the other literatures can be drawn into our scheme will be discussed in the sixth chapter on Collateral Studies in World Literature.

When this much has been secured, a due representation of our nearer and more remote literary affiliations, a large scope is left for individual choice. But the freedom of individual choice may yet be true to the essential idea of feeling after the unity of literature, especially if it seeks to draw together analogous works from different quarters of the literary field. The scientific treatment of our subject has indicated a similar purpose by its name of Comparative Literature. The seventh chapter, on Comparative Reading, will suggest an analogous principle applicable to the most general reader's enjoyment of literature.

The standpoint of this work is literary culture, as distinguished from literary science. Now, it has been characteristic of the "gentle reader"—as the last century styled him — that he has always laid emphasis upon literature as a revelation of the personality of the

the general literary field by the assumption of four World Bibles — Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Goethe. Though the particular selection does not satisfy me, yet I have always considered this one of the most interesting attempts to compass in practical education the study of World Literature.

author. In the past no doubt this has been carried to excess, and literary biography, not to say literary gossip, has passed muster for the study of literature. Yet the instinct is a sound one; it is the high prerogative of literature to bring us into contact with the best minds. But this is attained in the highest degree when we seek, not what others tell of authors, but the self-revelation these authors vouchsafe in certain literary forms consecrated to this very purpose. The eighth chapter of this work will deal with Literary Organs of Personality: Essays and Lyrics.

When all that is possible has been done in the way of direct principles bearing upon a conception of World Literature, there will still remain a vast proportion of the whole field that has been untouched, a vaster proportion, it will appear, than any single mind can hope to reach. To meet this consideration, our ninth chapter will offer suggestions on Strategic Points in Literature: the selection of literature possibly not more important in itself than other literature, yet of special value for the correlation of literature with literature, or for its bearing on the historic considerations that assist such correlation.

The final chapter will seek to bring back the argument from the parts to the whole, and emphasize the high significance of World Literature so far as we can attain it. Such World Literature, it will suggest, is nothing less than the Autobiography of Civilization.

SURVEY OF WORLD LITERATURE



CHAPTER I

THE FIVE LITERARY BIBLES

The Holy Bible

IN our task of reducing the miscellaneous vastness of universal literature to that practicable unity which is to be called world literature, we begin by recognizing what I have ventured to call the five literary bibles. First and foremost of these is the Holy Bible, which is the foundation of our modern religion. But in approaching our sacred scriptures from the literary side we are met at the outset by a strange difficulty, which amounts indeed to nothing less than this — that in the course of its transmission through the ages the Bible has almost entirely lost its literary form. The question is not of translation: while of course no version can be perfect or final, yet we have reason to be well content with what our biblical translators have done for us. Nor is it necessary to dwell upon beauty of style: the English Bible has had a large share in determining our very conceptions of literary style. But a literature implies something more than correct language and charm of diction. A literature is made up of a great variety of literary forms — epic poems, lyrics, dramas, orations,

essays, historical and philosophical works, and the like: the discrimination of such forms is essential not only for the full force but even for the interpretation of a literary work. A man who should peruse a drama under the impression that he was reading an essay would go wildly astray as to the significance of what he was reading; this would be an obvious truth were it not that such a thing seems inconceivable. But this is precisely the kind of thing which happens in connection with the Bible. The Hebrew Scriptures go back to an antiquity in which the art of manuscript writing was in an embryonic condition; when manuscripts scarcely divided words and sentences, much less indicated distinctions between prose and verse, between one metre and another, between speeches in dialogue, or even the simplest divisions in straightforward prose. The delicate varieties of biblical literature, however clear they might be to the ages that first received them, must, for their preservation, be committed to manuscripts of this kind, manuscripts in which all literary forms would look alike. It appears, then, that the form of our modern bibles has been given to them, not by the sacred writers themselves, but by others who, centuries later, had charge of the scriptures at the time when manuscripts began to indicate differences of form. Now these were rabbinical and mediæval commentators: men to whom literary form meant nothing, but who regarded the Bible as material for commentary, each short clause being worthy of lengthened disquisition. The form such commentators would give to their scripture would

naturally be that of texts for comment. In this form of numbered texts or verses it came down to our translators; the most elementary distinction of form, that between prose and verse, was not discovered in relation to the Hebrew Scriptures until more than a century after King James's Version had been completed. The bibles most commonly circulated amongst us are these bibles in mediæval form; however correct the translation may be, they remain a double misrepresentation of the sacred original, as ignoring on the one hand the literary varieties of form, and on the other hand presenting, in their chapters and verses, a structure which is alien to the Bible itself, and is the creation of mediæval commentators.

I take a brief illustration from the Preface to the Modern Reader's Bible. Such a passage as *Hosea*, chapter xiv, verses 5–8, would in an ancient manuscript (if we assume the language to be English) have appeared thus: —

I W I L L B E A S T H E D E W U N T O I S R A E L H
E S H A L L B L O S S O M A S T H E L I L Y A N D C
A S T F O R T H H I S R O O T S A S L E B A N O N H
I S B R A N C H E S S H A L L S P R E A D A N D H I
S B E A U T Y S H A L L B E A S T H E O L I V E T R
E E A N D H I S S M E L L A S L E B A N O N T H E Y
T H A T D W E L L U N D E R H I S S H A D O W S H A
L L R E T U R N T H E Y S H A L L R E V I V E A S T
H E C O R N A N D B L O S S O M A S T H E V I N E T
H E S C E N T T H E R E O F S H A L L B E A S T H E
W I N E O F L E B A N O N E P H R A I M S H A L L S
A Y W H A T H A V E I T O D O A N Y M O R E W I T H
I D O L S I H A V E A N S W E R E D A N D W I L L R
E G A R D H I M I A M L I K E A G R E E N F I R T R
E E F R O M M E I S T H Y F R U I T F O U N D

This the mediæval commentators broke up into short masses — sentences, texts, propositions — of what they considered a convenient length for discussion, and numbered them for reference.

5. I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall blossom as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon.

6. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon.

7. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and blossom as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.

8. Ephraim shall say, What have I to do any more with idols? I have answered, and will regard him: I am like a green fir tree; from me is thy fruit found.

Yet a brief examination of the passage is sufficient to show that it is a portion of a dramatic scene; and its structure ought to be exhibited as that of dramatic dialogue.

THE LORD

I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall blossom as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and blossom as the vine: the scent thereof shall be as the wine of Lebanon.

EPHRAIM

What have I to do any more with idols?

THE LORD

I have answered, and will regard him.

EPHRAIM

I am like a green fir tree —

THE LORD

From me is thy fruit found.

This accident of tradition has had far-reaching consequences. A bible thus broken up into sentences becomes obscure, and needs assistance for its interpretation; the assistance comes in the shape of commentary and annotation, with references, cross-references, chain references, and all the familiar apparatus of biblical helps. But the remedy aggravates the disease: the exegesis which seems to do so much in the way of elucidation, and which of course does elucidate the particular sentences, yet hangs a curtain of disconnectedness between the reader and the impression of the literary whole. For in exegesis the unit is a sentence, in literature the unit is a book; that is to say, a drama or lyric or oration, whatever the particular form may be. In literature the whole is something different from the sum of the parts. A drama acted as a whole upon a stage, even though the presentation be crude and the actors only faintly literary, yet brings us nearer to the dramatic significance than the reading of many annotated editions of the play, which may give scholarly help as to sentences and allusions, yet leave plot, character, and dramatic movement to take care of themselves. Two things then are necessary to the realization of the Bible as literature in the truest sense. We must in the first place do for it what is as a matter of course done for all other literature, ancient or modern — we must print it in its complete literary structure, a structure discovered by internal evidence and literary analysis. Dialogue must appear as dialogue, with distinction of speeches and names of speakers; verse must appear with the proper variations of metre; epic must be dis-

tinguished from history, essay from song: such structural presentation goes far towards making commentary superfluous. But to this must be added a changed habit of mind. To the interpretation of exegesis must be added the interpretation of perspective: which takes in a literary work as a whole, examines the mutual relation of its parts, feeling always after that unity which is the soul of a work of art. Only when all this has been done can the Bible take its proper place among the literatures of the world. With the spiritual import and the theological interpretation we are not here concerned. But the devout reader may rest assured that literary presentation can but assist theology, so far as theology is sound. The heterogeneous and mutually contradictory theological notions which are confidently supported by biblical quotations are possible only with a Bible broken up into sentences, in which the separate verses, like the separate sticks of a faggot, can be broken or bent in accordance with preconceived ideas.[1]

When the Bible is restored to its full literary structure, it presents itself, not as a book, but as a library — a library of very varied literature, varied in date, in authorship, and in the types of literature represented. Two lines of study offer themselves to the reader. He may take up particular books of scripture, realizing their intrinsic interest, and how their classification enlarges

[1] The Modern Reader's Bible (see page 484) presents the whole Bible, with part of the Apocrypha, in complete literary structure. The translation is the Revised Version (text or margin). The order of the books is not the traditional order, nor any attempted historical reconstruction, but the "literary sequence" referred to below (pages 72–6).

our ideas of literary form. But there is the further interest of noting how the books of the Bible, which seem so miscellaneous, are yet found to draw together into the literary unity of the Bible as a whole.

I

It has been the tradition to say that the Bible contains no epic. Such a statement is possible only to the limited criticism that squares its notions solely by those of the Greeks. When we go back to first principles of literary classification, it is easy to distinguish in the Bible the narrative that is *history*, concerned with the connection of things, from the narrative that is *story*, making its appeal to the imagination and the emotions. These stories are in prose, and stand as part of the annals of Israel, to which they lend the emphasis of historic pictures. It is only when we read these biblical stories as a whole, apart from the historic context, that we realize what a wealth of creative story the Bible contains. The past is re-created for us, with the crisp simplicity of presentation that is the note of ancient epic. Idyls, like the story of Tobit or Ruth, have kept fresh the by-play of common life as life was some three thousand years ago. The stories of *Genesis* restore to us the patriarchal age, a family life into which the sense of higher and spiritual things was gradually coming. With the "judges," so called, we have an heroic age of achievement and adventure; in the stories of the prophets we have a truly epic conflict between the spiritual and the secular elements of national life. Instead of the Bible

containing no epic, the truth is that the epic spirit is found to interpenetrate the whole national history.

Still more strange sounds the statement sometimes made that the Bible contains no drama. What is meant, apparently, is that the Hebrew people had no theatre; this is true, and is a curious fact. But the dramatic instinct, denied its natural channel, is found to have spread through Hebrew literature as a whole, until all parts of it seem interfused with the spirit of dramatic movement. We have the philosophic drama of *Job;* the series of dramatic idyls which make up the story of *Solomon's Song*. The book of *Deuteronomy* is unique as an oratorical drama: a series of orations and songs developing a pathetic situation to a noble climax in the farewell of Moses to Israel. But the most characteristic of these forms comes from prophecy; only the amorphous printing of our bibles could have concealed from readers how large a part of biblical prophecy is in dialogue, and how often this dialogue intensifies to a special type of literature—the "Rhapsodic Drama," to which the nearest counterpart in secular literature is perhaps such a poem as the *Prometheus* of Shelley. These rhapsodies are laid wholly in the region of the spiritual; the workings of Divine Providence are made to pass before the mental eye with all the intensity of dramatic movement. The actors of these spiritual scenes include God, the Celestial Hosts, the Nations of the earth, Israel or Zion personified, the Watchmen of Jerusalem bearing tidings from abroad; with less of personality Voices carry on the dialogue, Voices of the Saved or the Doomed, Voices from the East and the

West, Cries from the Hills of Ephraim or from outside the Holy Land; impersonal Songs break in at intervals, like chorales in modern oratorio, to spiritually celebrate the action that is passing. The changing scenes are beheld in vision, or described by the prophetic spectator. The movement may be successive stages of advancing doom, changing, as in *Joel*, into equally regular stages of salvation. Or it may be sudden: the sight of the Chaldeans stalking triumphant through the earth gives place to the sound from the distant future of the victims triumphing over Chaldea's fall; the pall of destruction is rent to display the mountain of salvation bright with sunshine and song. Of course such spiritual scenes are less easy to follow than the drama of ordinary life that can realize itself upon a visible stage. But what is lost in simplicity is less than what is gained in the wide reaches of spiritual movement and solemnity of import. Perhaps the dramatic masterpiece of universal literature is the "Rhapsody of Zion Redeemed," which makes the latter half of our book of *Isaiah*.

The prophetic discourse is amongst the most familiar forms of biblical literature; but it is to be noted that discourse, in the general sense of the word, is by prophecy enlarged to include two very special types. One is the Rhapsodic Discourse, so much affected by Jeremiah; what begins as simple oratory suddenly, as if by the raising of a curtain, merges in rhapsodic scenes of advancing judgment. The other is Emblem Prophecy, which is symbolic discourse. In its simplest form this implies no more than some visible or momentary action—the rending of a robe or the wearing

of the yoke of slavery—assumed as a text or visible starting-point for discourse. By Ezekiel, however, this Emblem Prophecy is developed to what makes a unique species in the history of literary art; histrionic action and oratorical speech are carried on side by side, elaborately interwoven. Among the prophets Ezekiel is the consummate artist: how impressive to the original hearers were these acted sermons is seen in many passages of *Ezekiel*, in which the audience interrupt with excited exclamations. It is seen again in the familiar passage,[1] in which the prophet seems to complain that the frivolous as well as the earnest among his fellow-captives were flocking to the prophet's house as if to hear "a very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice and can play well on an instrument"; we may paraphrase—

> as some to church repair,
> Not for the doctrine, but the music there.

The supremacy of biblical lyrics has been universally recognized. But here, as in other cases, Hebrew poetry enlarges our ideas of literary form and adds a new conception of lyric poetry. This is largely due to a well-known peculiarity of the Hebrew language, by which the basis of its verse is a parallelism of clauses that belongs almost equally to prose; the result is a remarkable literary elasticity, with the utmost freedom of blending or making transitions between prose and verse. Indeed, it is only as a matter of practical convenience that the terms "prose" and "verse" can be applied to biblical literature; what we really have is a most delicate

[1] *Ezekiel* xxxiii. 32.

rhythmic difference, somewhat like that in music between recitative and strict time. The combination of the two admits of unlimited variations and delicate shadings, rhythmically reflecting variations and shadings of thought. Especially to be noted is the Doom Form, so common in prophetic literature; here monologues of Deity, expressed in what may be called prose, are continually interrupted by highly rhythmic passages that realize or dilate upon what has been said, as if, when Deity is the speaker, the word and its fulfilment must be heard together. Such Dooms are sometimes a simple denunciation of Edom or some other foe of Israel; sometimes they present more elaborately a Day of the Lord. Or, in *Nahum*, the Doom can become an elaborate rhapsodic picture of Nineveh in its fall: the careless security of the city merging in the surprise of the sudden attack, the din of city activity blending with the crash of ruin, victims carried into captivity before they have realized that war has begun, the slain corpses of the city's crimes huddled against the corpses slain by the advancing foe, the curtain of solitude settling down upon the late busy scene; while through these phases of destruction from first to last the Voice of Jehovah has been heard denouncing the moral corruption and speaking the word of judgment.

A large part of the sacred scriptures is philosophy; yet the word "philosophy" seems to be carefully avoided. This is Biblical Wisdom: a philosophy not divorced from creative literature. The philosophy of all literatures begins with such wisdom; but in Greek and modern literatures the philosophy is soon seen to have trav-

elled far from poetry and practical life, and to become analytic reflection on the nature of things. Scriptural wisdom is a reflection on the sum of things, but the reflection has always a bearing upon conduct; further, all the forms of poetry and prose seem to be at its service. The earlier books of wisdom convey their sense of the harmony reigning through the universe in hymns to Wisdom; these hymns are a special form of poetry, which seems to have the spirit of the modern sonnet, though not its fixity of structure. In *Ecclesiasticus,* the Baconian type of essay is seen gradually developing out of the primitive gnome or proverb. What may be called prose hymns dilate upon the wonders of God in external nature. Personal monologues are found making a part of philosophical exposition: the personality is sometimes that of the wicked, sometimes the historical personality of Solomon; sometimes the speaker is Wisdom personified, or the opposite of this in the "Strange Woman"—the suggestive phrase which insinuates the idea that sin is a "foreigner" or intruder in God's good universe. And all through the other literary forms the primitive proverb or epigram has free course, some of the later monologues being almost mosaics of such popular sayings. The climax of such wisdom literature is the many-sided *Book of Job.* This is, in the first place, a complete drama; it has an open-air scene, changing at the end to a scene of storm and tempest; it has personal speakers with a silent chorus of spectators; its dramatic movement culminates in the descent of Deity. But the drama is also a philosophic discussion: the different speakers are associated with

the ideas of wisdom literature in the different stages of its history, while the dramatic situation is a simple situation of every-day life, which challenges the fixed idea of ancient wisdom that righteousness and prosperity must go together. And, to complete this intermingling of literary forms in *Job*, the problem at issue, proved insoluble in the drama that enacts itself on earth, finds solution in the prophetic revelation of heaven that makes the prologue and epilogue of the poem.

If then we go no farther than the consideration of particular books of scripture, we can see that the literary importance of the Bible is not less than its spiritual significance. There is need of Hebrew "classics" to supplement the classics of the Greek and Latin languages. One of the greatest obstacles in the way of literary study taking its proper place in the circle of the sciences is the fact that literary criticism unfortunately crystallized too early; the principles formulated by Aristotle for the single literature of the Greeks came to be mistaken for universal principles binding upon universal literature. A corrective for this traditional misconception is at hand in the study of biblical literature, which, in whatever direction we look, is found to enlarge our conceptions of literary form. Much may be truly said as to the value of literary study for the elucidation of the Bible. But the converse of this is not less true: that biblical study is essential for a sound and well-balanced literary criticism.[1]

[1] The whole question of the literary forms represented in Scripture is discussed in my *Literary Study of the Bible* (see below, page 485). A briefer treatment will be found in my *Short Introduction to the Literature of the Bible*.

II

I pass on to the second of the two kinds of literary interest attaching to the sacred scriptures, that connected with their unity. What we call the Bible is a collection of some fifty or sixty different books — books written in Hebrew, Greek, or Aramaic; of great variety of date and authorship and (as we have just seen) literary form. They have been brought together — in what is technically called the history of the canon — by a process of natural selection, a survival of the spiritually fittest, the basis of which is theological, or certainly not literary. Yet for all this, these books of scripture, read in their proper sequence, are felt to draw together with a connectedness as clear as the successive stages of a dramatic plot.

At this point, however, great caution is necessary. When I speak of the books of scripture being read in their proper sequence, I refer to a sequence which is literary, not historical. One of the great difficulties of our subject is that, at the present time, the study of literature is overshadowed by the more flourishing study of history, and the spheres of the two studies are continually being confused. There is another analysis of scripture, widely different from that which is here attempted, which goes below the surface of scripture, intent on questions of origins, analyzes the text into what may appear its component materials, dates these component elements, and attempts reconstruction. I repeat what has already been said in the Introduction to this

work, that all this is highly important in its own field, but that field is not literary, nor in the proper sense biblical. It is clear that the product of historical analysis can be nothing else but history. The matter of our Bible, when it has been subjected to historical reconstruction, ceases to be the Bible, and becomes something quite different: something important to the historic specialist, a valuable exhibit for a museum of Semitic studies. It is not the positive history of Israel — which, like all history, must undergo reconstruction with each stage of advancing historic science — that has revolutionized the spiritual ideas of the world, and come to constitute a priceless possession of universal culture. The Bible which has done all this is one particular interpretation of the history of Israel, a spiritual interpretation made once for all by the sacred writers, and embodied in a literature that stands as final and unalterable.

This distinction between the literary and the historic conception of the Bible will appear increasingly important as we proceed with our task of realizing the unity of scripture. At first, when we try to think into a connected whole the varied works of this scripture, we may get an impression that what we have before us is history, for the simple reason that one who has read through the Bible from cover to cover has traversed the ages from the creation to the first century of our era. But this is only a first impression. Upon examination we find that history in the Bible is no more than an historic framework, a connective tissue holding together the higher literary forms — epic, lyric, song, drama, dis-

course, and the like — in which higher forms is contained the life and spirit of the whole. The sacred historians themselves seem impatient of the work of history, as appears in numerous passages of this nature: —

Now the rest of the acts of [such and such a king], and how he [did this and that], are they not written in the books of the chronicles of the kings of Judah? etc.

The biblical writers refer their readers to other works if they desire history: what is being given is no more than historic outline for more significant kinds of writing. To this consideration another must be added. What I am calling the historic framework appears to be late in date; the higher forms of literature it encloses are of all dates, early and late. In calling the historic framework late, it is not meant, necessarily, that the actual sentences containing it were written at a late date. No doubt those who constructed our scriptures found earlier records upon which they drew, piecing different records together, much in the same way that we of the present time make harmonies of the four gospels, piecing together passages from each to make a continuous biography of Jesus. It is this construction of the framework that was late, while (I repeat) the stories, songs, discourses so enclosed are of all dates from the earliest to the latest.

Now, all this is important as suggesting for the Bible the literary form of an autobiography. For how is an autobiography composed? No one supposes that the chapter on the hero's childhood was written by him when he was a child, or that the account of his marriage

and early business struggles was composed during the period of his courtship and apprenticeship. The author would probably be advanced in life before he would come to conceive the idea of writing his autobiography; as an elderly man he would write the account of his childhood, but would insert in this account his actual childish attempts at poetry, or letters home; as an elderly man he would tell the tale of his courtship and his entry into his profession, supporting these with specimen love-letters or early business documents. The continuous narrative, constructed late, would be a framework for literary illustrations dating from all parts of his career. In the same way the Bible appears as an autobiography: not the autobiography of an individual, or even of a nation, but the autobiography of a spiritual evolution. The Old Testament is the History of the People of Israel as presented by itself. The New Testament is the History of the Primitive Church as presented by itself. It would be late in its history before the People of Israel, at last fully realizing its sacred mission, set itself to think out the successive stages of its career, inserting in the account of each of these stages the stories, songs, discourses, dramas, to which that stage had given origin. The Primitive Church would have proceeded some way in its development before the early Christians, finding verbal traditions begin to waver, undertook "to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which had been fully established among them," as these matters had been "delivered by eyewitnesses and ministers of the word"; with such narrative the New Testament would include the successive sayings, discourses, epistles, which

constituted the witness. Once more we see the importance of insisting upon the literary view of the Bible. For literature is of two kinds: the literature which is progressive, each stage attained superseding previous stages; and the literature which is fixed and eternal. The greatest work of science or philosophy must in a short time become antiquated, or by annotation be brought up to date. But does any one think of bringing the *Iliad* up to date, or of modernizing Shakespeare? It is the high prerogative of poetry that from the moment it comes into existence it is final and eternal. Now, autobiography belongs to that class of literature which is thus eternal and unalterable. Had the sacred literature taken the form of science or history, there must have been a revised Bible for each fresh generation; and this, not because of weakness in the Bible itself, but from the very nature of history and science. But as the autobiography of our religion the Bible stands fixed and unalterable; more truly than any creed, it is our sacred literature that makes the "faith once for all delivered to the saints."

Given the general conception of the Bible as a whole, it becomes not difficult to outline its literary structure. We commonly think of the Bible as in two divisions, an Old and New Testament; it is better to regard it as threefold, in order to do justice to certain books that stand entirely apart from all the rest. These are the books of wisdom: *Proverbs*, *Ecclesiastes*, and *Job* in the Bible itself, with which must be associated *Ecclesiasticus* and *Wisdom* in the Apocrypha. How distinct is the character of these books will appear

when we remember that in three out of the five there is no mention of Israel, or of its Messianic hopes, its temple service, its law; in the other two, while institutions of Israel are recognized, they have no bearing on the main purpose of the books. We may think of these books of wisdom as belonging to the interval between the Old and New Testaments; chronologically this is true of a considerable part of wisdom literature, while as regards logical relation to the rest of scripture it describes wisdom as a whole. When the sun goes down, the stars come out; when the high spiritual hopes of the theocracy have died down into disappointment, and before a new starting-point for theology has been found in the career of Jesus, the consideration of simple human life comes naturally into emphasis, and wisdom literature is the devout contemplation of human life. Thus we may conceive of the Bible as a drama in two great acts, with wisdom literature as an interlude between two theologies.

The Old Testament is the Old Covenant, and this is the covenant between God and the people of Israel. Eleven chapters of the Bible serve as prologue to what follows. They describe previous covenants between God and all mankind as represented in common ancestors, first Adam and then Noah; in each case the covenant breaks down and the world relapses into sin; at the last, as indicated by the Babel incident, the sinful world is breaking up into nations. This is the point where the history of Israel can begin: a single nation is chosen from the rest, that through them all other

nations may be blessed; in other words, they are chosen to be a revelation of their God to the rest of the world. Following this, the Old Testament falls into five well-marked historic divisions. *Genesis* gives us the "origin" of the Chosen People: the brief historic outline and successive stories of the Patriarchs trace a family expanding to the point at which it may change into a nation. The second division is the "Exodus," or emigration to the land of promise; this is treated as the period of constitutional development, and hence its three books (*Exodus*, *Leviticus*, *Numbers*), in addition to framework and stories, are filled with constitutional documents, chiefly covenants, that is, re-statements from time to time of the relations between the people and its God. Between the second and third divisions of the Old Testament is placed, with great literary impressiveness, the oratorical drama of *Deuteronomy;* if such an expression might be allowed, this is the graduating exercise of Israel, and the now developed nation is launched on its life-work with its founder's blessing:—

> The Eternal God is thy dwelling place,
> And underneath are the everlasting arms.

The history that follows is the great transition from a theocracy to a secular government; the books of this third division (*Joshua*, *Judges*, part of *Samuel*) may be unified under the title of "The Judges." These heroes of Israel's history make a transition to the kingship that is to succeed, in the temporary or partial national unity they effect under the stress of special emergencies.

We reach the fourth and main division of Old Testament history with the complete establishment of the kingship. Yet, if the title is to describe the matter, this portion of the Bible must be styled "The Kings and Prophets." In the history of modern self-governing peoples we regularly have an administration and an opposition, the function of the opposition as important as that of the administration. So with Israel we have a secular government of kings and a spiritual opposition of prophets; as the word "prophet" implies, these are "mouthpieces of God," representatives of the older conception of the theocracy. Thus this portion of the history (the latter part of *Samuel* and the books of *Kings*) becomes annals of the kings with stories of the prophets. A distinction must be taken between the earlier and the later prophets. The earlier prophets, with Elijah at their head, are men of action, entering into biblical literature only as heroes of prophetic stories. The later prophets, without ceasing to be men of action, are also men of letters, the great poets, orators, dramatists, of Israel. Men like Isaiah and Jeremiah do for their own generation all that Elijah and Micaiah had done for theirs; but besides all this they have the gift to remould the matter of their daily ministrations in rich and varied literary forms, that carry a spiritual message for all time. Hence a slight change in the form of scripture. Hitherto the stories and songs have been inserted at the point of the historic outline to which they belong; when Israel has reached its full literary maturity with the later prophets this arrangement becomes impracticable. The historic out-

line is allowed to complete itself in the latter part of *Kings*, while the books of the prophets, from *Isaiah* to *Malachi*, make a separate literary division. Sometimes a book of prophecy is a single literary work; more often a miscellany of varied literary types. These books of the prophets, with the still more miscellaneous *Book of Psalms*, must be understood as holding the same relation to the history in *Kings* that the earlier stories and songs have held to their narrative context.

But more is to be noted than a change of literary form: the whole course of the history that is being presented undergoes the modification which makes the crisis in the dramatic movement of the Old Testament. The brilliant literature of the prophets, however rich and varied may be the forms in which the sacred message is clothed, is nevertheless found to rest upon just two fixed thoughts. The prophets tell of a golden age of righteousness in the future; this mental attitude of seeking the golden age in the future, and not in the past, makes the reading of biblical prophecy a moral inspiration. The other note of prophecy is the purging judgment through which alone this golden age may be reached. Now, as the history proceeds it becomes more and more evident that this gulf of judgment, on the other side of which is the golden age, is to mean nothing less than the fall of Israel as a nation. The Old Testament is moving to its decay; yet not before there has been a vision of a New Testament. Jeremiah, whose life-work brings him into closest contact with the stages of Israel's fall, is the one who sees most clearly that which is to come.

Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake. . . . But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the LORD; I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it.

The covenant between God and a Chosen People is breaking down, but there is to be a covenant between God and individual hearts; the theocracy of the Old Testament is to come to an end, but there is a vision of the kingdom of God that is within. In the light of such a vision we follow the remaining stages of the history. Israel is carried into captivity; there is no biblical history of the exile, yet it is pictured for us in the stories of *Daniel* and *Esther*. Then we reach the fifth and last division of Old Testament history, the Chronicles of the Return. It is not the whole people who return from captivity, but only those whose hearts are set upon the restoration of the Divine worship; here the nation of Israel has changed into the Jewish Church. Its literature is the Ecclesiastical Chronicles of Israel (the books of *Chronicles* with their sequel, *Ezra* and *Nehemiah*). What is thus presented is a strenuous effort to restore that which, in reality, has passed away; prophecy, with its eyes on the future, falls into the background, and the dominant element is the law, with its eyes on the past, more and more fastening upon the letter and external ceremony, from beneath which the inspiration has forever gone. With this final phase of a Jewish Church, fully realizing its

mission to the nations of the earth, idolizing law and forgetting prophetic vision of the spiritual future, the curtain descends upon the Old Testament.

But there is one prophetic poem, most splendid of all, which stands as epilogue to the Old Testament, gathering up its whole movement and spirit in poetic presentation. The Rhapsody of Zion Redeemed — our name for the latter half of the *Book of Isaiah* — in its main scene pictures the nations of the world standing before the bar of God; on the one side the idolatrous nations, on the other side Israel. Jehovah challenges the idols "to declare former things, to show things to come"; in other words, to put an interpretation upon the whole course of events from first to last. Clearly it is a Divine philosophy of history that we are receiving in dramatic form. When the idols are dumb, Jehovah's interpretation is given. He proclaims Israel as his servant: the service is to bring the nations under His law. But not by violence: the bruised reed he shall not break, the smoking flax he shall not quench, yet he must be preserved until he has brought light to the Gentiles. When the interrupting outburst of exultation has died away, the proclamation continues: this servant is blind and deaf, has for his sins fallen into the prison-house of the nations; the conquering career of Cyrus has brought deliverance, and there comes forth a blind servant that hath eyes, a deaf servant that hath ears. Two ideas are thus presented. One is simple: the restoration to Israel of its sense of its Divine mission; a subsequent scene makes this Israel a witness to the nations, inviting the peoples

of the world to enter into the commonwealth of Israel. The other is an idea that we read with ever increasing wonder: in this ancient biblical book is enshrined, with most powerful poetic setting, the thought which twenty following centuries of religious war and persecution failed to grasp, the idea that in the spiritual world physical force is powerless; by agencies gentle as the light may a world be conquered for God. As the drama continues, a change seems to come over the central figure: the servant of Jehovah from a nation becomes a personality that can suffer martyrdom; yet again it becomes a mystic personality whose sufferings are at last recognized by the nations as vicarious. Another scene pictures a moral chaos: at the point of extremity Jehovah himself resolves to bring salvation. As the strains of the hymn to Redeemed Zion die away, the Redeemer seems to make his entry, announcing his glorious mission.

The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me; because the LORD hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all that mourn; to appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them a garland for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness.

From this ministry of healing, the drama proceeds on its course to its climax in the Day of Judgment. Thus in this poem the whole spirit of the Old Testament is dramatically gathered up. The nation that was to bring the other nations to its God has, in the course of

history, broken down. Its divine mission has risen in a glorified form: the Servant of Jehovah that is to be shall gather in the nations, not by war and conquest, but by the gentle agencies of healing and redemption.

In following the movement of scripture as a whole, we have now reached the interval between the Old and the New Testament, an interval which, we have seen, is filled by wisdom literature. But this wisdom literature has a movement of its own. The most important aspect of this scriptural philosophy is that which is expressed by the word "Wisdom" used as a personification. This higher Wisdom includes, not only human character as a whole, but also the spirit of the external universe: the world within and the world without are one. This higher Wisdom, as we follow it through successive books, is seen to pass through three well-marked stages. In the first stage (represented by *Proverbs* and *Ecclesiasticus*) all is philosophic calm; the harmony of life and the universe is celebrated in hymns of adoration, all analysis and questioning being confined to what may be called the lower wisdom — the mere details of life. With the book of *Ecclesiastes* a crisis is reached, and scriptural philosophy passes through a stage of storm and stress. For now analysis and questioning have been turned upon the sum of things: philosophy seems unequal to the strain, and breaks down in despair. The word "Wisdom," in the high sense, disappears, and the characteristic word "Vanity" takes its place; every attempt to find a meaning in the universe is frustrated, and "all things are vanity."

In the philosophical sense of the word, this is scepticism. Yet it is strangely different from what that word usually suggests: the more our author fails to find Wisdom, the closer he is driven to God, who alone has the secret of the universe. When the Bible touches scepticism, scepticism becomes a mode of devotion.

But why this scepticism, so different from the spirit of the rest of scripture? On the surface it is easy to point out that this idea of scepticism is, in *Ecclesiastes*, always associated with another idea — that death is the end of all things; it is because every attempted solution of life is mocked by the thought of death that the Preacher breaks down in despair. But this has only shifted the difficulty one stage farther back: how comes it that in this one book the thought of what may be beyond the grave, ignored perhaps in other Old Testament books, is now made the subject of almost passionate denial?

One difference of wisdom literature from the rest of scripture is that it lacks the historic framework which, we have seen, connects together the books of both the Old and the New Testament. We have to supply the historic framework ourselves. In the interval between the Old and the New Testament the world that was around the Hebrew people was undergoing fundamental changes. The centre of gravity of civilization was shifting steadily westward; as Chaldea and the far East had had to yield overlordship to Persia, so Persia had to yield it to Greece, and Greece finally to Rome. Further, to this general period belongs the beginning of that which in this work I am treating as the foundation

of our modern life, the union of Hellenic and Hebraic civilization. The conquests of Alexander thrust Hellenism upon the whole civilized world; even Palestine, after long and strenuous resistance, becomes slowly Hellenized, while in Alexandria we have a new centre of Jewish life, in which the Hebrew mind is subject to the full power of the new influences. This secular history has the closest connection with the sacred literature we are considering; for it has a bearing upon what is amongst the foremost of religious conceptions, the question of the immortality of the soul.

Every reader must have been struck with the contradictory assertions so often heard as to the Old Testament and the doctrine of immortality: how one authority will maintain that there is no trace in the Old Testament of this idea of immortality, while another finds in its books ready texts for sermons on our future life. Such contradiction would be impossible were there not some ambiguity in the terms of the discussion. And this is the case. When we, in modern times, use the expression "life after death," we have in mind a new type of life, commencing at the moment of death. The life beyond death recognized by antiquity was, on the contrary, a survival of this present life in a weaker form. Obviously to the senses death cuts off an individual from communication with this world; but his body does not immediately disappear, time is required for it to crumble into dust and nothingness. What the senses tell us of the body, antiquity believed to be true also of the soul: consciousness with the moment of death lost all power of communication with the

world without, yet lingered for a time conscious to itself, slowly dying down, like a mist dispersing into nothing. This waning survival of life beyond the moment of death was an idea of all the nations of antiquity. The Hebrews held it equally with the rest; and some of the most realistic descriptions of the state come from the *Book of Job*, especially the image of the landslip: that falls in a moment, yet takes time to crumble away, like man cut off by death, knowing nought of his children's honor or shame, yet knowing the pangs of dissolution amid the mournful solitude of the grave.[1] And ancient life did more than merely recognize this diminishing existence in the tomb: it read into it — usually in a vague, unsystematic way — ideas of the moral retribution so often found lacking in the life that now is. Hence Tartarus and Elysium; hence the Sheol into which shall return the nations that forget God; hence, above all, the curious Oriental conception of metempsychosis, the re-birth of individuals in the higher and lower forms of animal and vegetable life, each form, with nice equity, proportioned in its honor or degradation to the moral character of previous lives.

When this ambiguity in the conception of life beyond death is cleared away, then the question before us becomes simple. Of the two elements that combined to make the modern world, Hellenic civilization stood for the idea of Immortality; not only did it, like the rest of antiquity, recognize the shadowy survival of existence, but it held that life was in its very essence

[1] *Job* xiv. 18–23.

indestructible. Yet this was an immortality that the modern mind would not accept as a gift; for it was immortality without individuality. What of personality there was beyond death belonged, in the Oriental conception of things, to the retributive survival of life; when the individual was purged of his evil, he then reached the fulness of immortality by absorption into the infinite, the individual drop lost in the ocean. Now, of immortality in this sense there is no trace in the Old Testament. What Hebrew thought stands for, on the contrary, is Personality: it gives to this idea the highest exaltation by recognizing, from first to last, God Himself as a personal God. It is nothing to the point to urge that Greek and Oriental thought has also its personal deities. This is true; but in Oriental thought Deity is not the supreme power in the universe. Greek deities are but larger humanities: above Deity stands Destiny.

Not even Zeus can escape the thing decreed.

Fate, Destiny, is to the Oriental mind the supreme power, and Fate and Destiny are impersonal. Of such impersonal Fate or Destiny there is not a suggestion in Hebrew Scriptures; Divine Personality rules supreme. The account then stands thus: Hellenic thought conceives Immortality without Individuality; Hebrew thought emphasizes Personality while ignoring Immortality; by the intermingling of Hellenic and Hebraic the way is prepared for the grand conception of the Immortality of the Individual Soul.

When we read wisdom literature in the light of this

historic background, the crisis of its movement in the book of *Ecclesiastes* becomes intelligible. The book belongs to the literature of Palestine, but a Palestine becoming permeated by Hellenic influences. The Hebrew thinker finds around him new ideas of immortality which his natural proclivities do not allow him to accept. Yet, to the mind to which this idea has once been presented, the world without it seems a hollow mockery: hence the Preacher's despair. But from the other centre of Hebraic thought, Alexandria, comes another book, the *Wisdom of Solomon*, with which scriptural philosophy reaches its third and final stage. In this work the union of the ideas of immortality and individuality is found fully established. God, it declares, made not death: righteousness is immortal. With the peculiar power of analytic imagination that makes this author's writing hang half-way between poetry and prose, he pictures the sinful life as a life impelled to sin by lack of hope beyond the grave. Then the sinners are pictured as rising from the grave to encounter the great surprise; they realize how the souls of the departed righteous have been all the while in the hand of God; how their own life of rapturous pleasure was an empty dream; then they are whirled away by the blast of judgment. Thus wisdom literature, in its final stage, recovers its philosophic calm; the calm becomes a triumph. The life enlarged by immortality no longer seems vanity. Wisdom reappears as the Providence ruling through the life without and the life within: the unspotted mirror of the working of God and the image of His goodness.

If the whole of Scripture be conceived as a mighty drama, then wisdom literature appears an interlude between its two acts. Yet this wisdom literature, with its stages of calm, storm, and recovered calm, is a lesser drama in itself. And the interlude is also a link of connection: the human life that passes from the theology of the Old to the theology of the New Covenant is a life into which the light of immortality has begun to enter.

The books of the New Testament, read in their proper sequence, show a literary structure, the counterpart of that in the Old Testament: an historic framework inclosing other literary forms which give the spirit of the whole. First, we have the Acts and Words of Jesus, the acts the historic framework for the words: this is the *Gospel of St. Luke*. Then we have the Acts and Words of the Apostles: the book of *Acts* and the Pauline epistles, which can, without difficulty, be fitted into their places in the historic narrative. When St. Paul arrives a prisoner at Rome, the formal historic narrative ceases; we can mentally supply the framework for the rest of the New Testament in the expectant attitude of the Church, looking for the near event that shall end their era with the coming of the Master. Against such historic background we set the Epistles of Paul's Imprisonment, the General Epistles, the Gospels of St. Matthew, St. Mark, and St. John. Finally, as the Old Testament has its epilogue in the Isaiahan Rhapsody, so the New Testament is crowned by the book of *Revelation*, the prophetic climax

of the whole Bible. The dramatic movement that is to be traced through this succession of books is the steadily advancing enlargement in the recognition and conception of Jesus Christ. Of course, in following this there is the difficulty that belongs to every work of antiquity read in modern times, the difficulty that the reader knows the end from the beginning. He must cultivate the historic attitude of mind, and use effort in the realization that he is in contact with the first beginnings of ideas and institutions which are familiar to him in their full development.

Most dramatic is the opening of the ministry of Jesus as related by St. Luke. Jesus comes to the Nazareth where he had been brought up: known in person, known also as associated with the religious revival under John the Baptist. The courtesies of the synagogue are extended to him, and he is invited to read from the Scriptures and expound. "The eyes of all in the synagogue were fastened on him:" and we feel as if the eyes of all history were fastened on this first act in the ministry that is to revolutionize the world. The portion of Scripture Jesus reads is the critical point of the Isaiahan Rhapsody, at which the Redeemer enters Zion and announces his mission of healing; Jesus then assumes the authoritative attitude of the teacher with the words, "To-day hath this scripture been fulfilled in your ears." With the fullest clearness and emphasis Jesus has identified himself with the prophetic Redeemer; the spiritual movement of the Old Covenant that has broken down is to start afresh with this inauguration of a Covenant that is New.

But not a soul of those who hear understands: the congregation of the synagogue feels nothing but indignation at the presumption of this carpenter's son. From this point of absolute negation starts the movement of progression in men's recognition of Jesus Christ.

The rest of St. Luke's gospel falls into two clear divisions, centering respectively around Galilee and Jerusalem. In the first half, Jesus appears as no more than a Teacher slowly gathering disciples, revealing new conceptions of life, and doing works of healing. When John the Baptist impatiently calls upon him to declare himself, Jesus has no answer but to point to the ministry of healing, as the revelation of what he is. The turning-point is reached when the band of disciples, but only they, recognize with Peter that Jesus is the Christ. All the synoptic gospels agree in representing that here for the first time Jesus opens the second aspect of his life in suffering and death; they agree in placing at this point, where the ministries of healing and suffering redemption have been brought together, the vision of the Transfiguration, that displays the Gospel as a new dispensation side by side with that of the Law and the Prophets. The second part of *St. Luke* presents the steady advance to Jerusalem, to the passion, the resurrection, the ascension. The reader must recognize the different spheres of theology and of literature: that on which theology lays supreme emphasis stands as only a single stage in the movement we are here tracing, the enlargement in men's recognition of Jesus Christ.

The book of *Acts* opens with the commission given to his apostles by Jesus — the threefold commission, that they are to be witnesses for him "in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." A simple narrative describes the fulfilment of the first two parts of this commission. But with regard to the third part, the carrying of the witness to the uttermost part of the earth, it is manifest that the book before us can give us only successive stages in the *conception* of world evangelization; steps in the enlargement of the witness that is to be borne, and of the machinery by which it is to be extended. The treatment of all this in *Acts* is the clearer as each fresh stage is marked by vision and miracle. The first revolution is the opening of the Gospel to the Gentiles: St. Peter's vision inspires the idea, the miraculous conversion of St. Paul brings the principal instrument. With the enlarged sphere of action comes enlargement in the machinery of propagation; in Antioch, centre of Gentile Christianity, a scene takes place, echoing in its description the Day of Pentecost, bringing as a new inspiration what to us is so trite and familiar, the thought that Christian Missions are to be the means of world evangelization. A new point of departure soon follows. The journeyings of these missionaries become embarrassed, with hindrances on every side to which they turn: the perplexity is resolved by the vision of the man of Macedonia crying, Come over and help us. Here we have the extension of Christianity from Asia into Europe; from the region of the stationary past to that of the future with its spirit of unlimited progress.

Then we see again the machinery of evangelization enlarging: by vision Paul is led to adopt a settled ministry in the large cities of Europe, and can keep in touch with the churches only by correspondence; the missionary epistlé supplements the missionary journey, and in the succession of epistles we have an organ for the treatment of the gradually unfolding questions of theology and ecclesiastical order. Here we seem to have entered upon a progression which is indefinite in extent, going on to our own times and beyond them. Yet for the age of the New Testament there is a point of finality: the world for the time is one, under the headship of Rome. The final section of *Acts* is a succession of strange incidents, intermingled with vision and miracle, bringing the apostle of the Gentiles to Rome. And the literature that is accompanying this history seems to reach a climax in the *Epistle to the Romans*, which, to a world audience, presents a harmonization of the Law and the Gospel, the Old Covenant and the New.

At this point, we have seen, the narrative of the New Testament ceases; our historic framework has to be collected from the literature itself. The primitive Church, of which the New Testament is the literary expression, seems to be marked off from other ages by a fixed idea which permeates it through and through: the idea that its times were the last times, that the end of all things was at hand, that the great consummation it called "the coming of the Lord" was an event near at hand. From the beginning of apostolic history this idea is found; but, naturally, the expectancy is height-

ened as the consummation is delayed. In the spirit of this intense expectancy we may read what still remains of New Testament literature.

Without going into questions of theology, it must be evident to the literary reader that all through the history covered by the book of *Acts*, and especially in the epistles of St. Paul, there has been a constant enlargement in the Church's recognition of Jesus Christ, and the conception it is forming of his person and significance. Under the quickened expectancy of the final period, this conception enlarges and intensifies, until language seems exhausted in the attempt to give it expression. *The Epistle to the Ephesians* finds in Jesus the "mystery of God": the reference is to the Sacred Mysteries that were the popular religion of the times, to the outside world a dramatic ceremonial, with a hidden meaning for the initiated; the thought of the epistle is that the whole providential government of the universe is such a mystery, of which the hidden meaning is Jesus Christ. *The Epistle to the Colossians* borrows from the Oriental religions which, overpowered by the sense of the interval between human and divine, sought to fill up this interval by a graded hierarchy of angelic emanations: the epistle seizes upon their characteristic word *pleroma*, and recognizes Jesus as the "fulness" that fills up the whole gulf between man and God. In an earlier stage the new evangel had had to fight against "the circumcision": the *Epistle to the Philippians* finds the word *concision* for the Judaizing opposition; it is the followers of Jesus who are the true "circumcision." The main conflict of the Gospel had been the conflict with the Law: in *An*

Epistle to Hebrews the most pronounced of Hebrews contends to his fellow Hebrews that the whole Law was but a preparation for the "better covenant" of which Jesus is the mediator. As here we have the full recognition of Jesus from the side of the Law, so from the side of Wisdom philosophy comes the same recognition in the *Gospel of St. Matthew*, the structure and matter of which make it the application of wisdom literature to the life of Christ.[1] And the *Gospel of St. John* brings the same recognition from the side of Greek philosophy: its mystic conception of the Word is borrowed, and it is shown how in Jesus the Word was made flesh.

All then is ready for the last book of Scripture which is to crown the whole, epilogue of Old and New Testament alike. The consummation which closed the era of the New Testament Church came in the form of an outburst of prophecy, by which the varied attempts to find adequate expression for the recognition of Jesus were all combined in one. Most unfortunately, the popular misunderstanding of the word "prophecy," which, aided by a false etymology, understands it as foretelling, has distorted the interpretation of this book, and diverted it into the unprofitable channel of eschatological speculations. But the opening words of the book proclaim it, not as a revelation of the future, but as "the revelation of Jesus Christ." Form and matter combine to make this revelation emphatic. The form is a series of visions, passing like dissolving views before the eye

[1] This view of *St. Matthew* is discussed at length in my *Short Introduction to the Literature of the Bible*, pages 194-209; more briefly in the Introduction to *Matthew* in the Modern Reader's Bible.

of the imagination. The visions are symbols that are echoes of the symbolism of the Old Testament. As vision follows vision, these mystic symbols advance, fill the field of view, and retreat, pointing ever to a climax that is to come. In the centre of the whole, when the seventh and final angel has sounded, the climax is attained: mystery changes into clearness with the shout of all heaven that "The kingdom of the World is become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever." This is the crowning word of the Bible. The dramatic movement that began in *Genesis*, that has run its course through the Old Covenant of Israel and the New Covenant of Jesus Christ, reaches its consummation when Jesus Christ is recognized as the centre of all history, past, present, and to come, and the significance of all prophetic literature.

The discussion in this chapter has not trenched upon the ground of theology; still less has it meddled with questions of religious controversy. The theologian and the controversialist will be the first to admit that the Holy Bible, whatever else it may be, is a supremely great literature. What this chapter has endeavored to present is the natural literary significance of Scripture, which must be the common ground from which higher interpretations will start. We have found the Bible a succession of literary works, all classics, that serve to enlarge our ideas of literary form. The distinction of these, from the point of view of world literature, is the unique interest by which such miscellaneous works, each with a literary unity of its own, combine to enter into a higher unity, the sublime movement of thought this

chapter has endeavored to trace. And the matter of which this literature is composed is the Hebraic thought which makes one of the two roots of our modern civilization. Whatever position, then, individual readers may hold as to the spiritual questions entering into the sacred scriptures, we must all be as one in reverence for our great literary heritage. He who is content to leave the Bible unstudied stands convicted as a half-educated man.

CHAPTER II

THE FIVE LITERARY BIBLES

Classical Epic and Tragedy

WE pass from the first to the second of our ancestral literatures, from the Hebraic to the Hellenic. Here there is no case of setting up literary claims: the Hellenic has dominated our whole conception of literature. The difficulty is rather practical: how the vastness of Greek and Roman literature, which for so many of us makes a whole life study, can be brought within due bounds as a single element in world literature. Yet several considerations will present themselves. The traditional name of the study — Classics — is suggestive of natural selection. Again, we have recognized that modern philosophy and science is a continuation of Greek thought: thus a large proportion of the ancient literature reaches modern culture indirectly, in studies not distinctively literary. A very important section of classical studies will be the Greek Orators, important not only for literary excellence, but also for the flood of light they bring upon the whole constitution and minute details of ancient life; these however belong to the departmental study of Hellenics rather than to universal literature. Single phases of Hellenic poetry, such as

its lyrics, enter into other parts of the present work. To what remains we may apply the idea of "literary bibles," that involves a worthy representation of a wider field which shall also be a workable unity. Such a literary bible, it appears to me, may be found in the combination of Classical Epic with Tragedy: not the whole of Tragedy, but that large number of Greek tragedies which touch the matter of the great epics. What this gives us is obviously a unity in itself; it is further just that part of classical literature which has most powerfully influenced the poetic thought of subsequent ages. In such a combination we recognize, not a selection, but a nucleus.

I proceed to particularize the poetic works which are thus to make a literary bible in their presentation of Classical Epic and Tragedy. They fall into two unequal divisions. A small group of poems presents an Heroic Myth of the First Generation: the Argonautic Expedition. We have the epic of Apollonius Rhodius, entitled *Argonautica*, and Euripides' tragedy of *Medea*. With these it may be well to take William Morris's *Life and Death of Jason*, as a modern reconstruction of the whole myth. The other division of our poems is made up of those founded on the Trojan War: an Heroic Myth of the Second Generation, it may be called, inasmuch as the heroes of this war are to a large extent represented as sons or grandsons of the Argonautic heroes. The matter of the Trojan War falls into successive phases. We have first the Gathering of the Heroes for Troy: the poetic presentation of this is the *Iphigenia in Aulis* of Euripides. In the war itself the

main episode is that of the Quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles: this is the foundation of the *Iliad*, and of the *Rhesus* of Euripides. Another great episode appears upon the Death of Achilles and the Rivalry of his successors in leadership: this has inspired the *Ajax* and the *Philoctetes* of Sophocles. The Fall of Troy gives us the *Hecuba* and the *Daughters of Troy* of Euripides. But it is the Departure of the Heroes from Troy which has called forth the largest number of poetic presentations. The home return of Agamemnon is connected with Æschylus's trilogy, the *Agamemnon*, the *Sepulchral Rites* and the *Eumenides;* with the *Electra* of Sophocles; with three plays of Euripides, the *Electra*, the *Orestes*, and the *Iphigenia in Taurica*. The return of Menelaus appears in the *Helen* of Euripides. The return of Odysseus is of course the foundation of the *Odyssey*. The return of Trojan captives is touched by the *Andromache* of Euripides. Finally, the departure from Troy of Æneas is the foundation for the *Æneid* of Virgil: this *Æneid* closes the list, and constitutes a grand link between Latin and Greek, and again between Latin and Mediæval. When this succession of poems is taken, not in the chronological order of their composition, nor in any order of literary development, but simply in the order of the story, they will be clearly seen to give the unity which, in combination with width of range and intrinsic literary excellence, is the note of what we are calling literary bibles.[1]

[1] For translations, etc., see the Book List below, pages 483–93.

I

When we survey this succession of poems as a literary whole, the first point to be noted is that they give us the poetic thinking of successive epochs working upon a common floating tradition. And to the modern mind this is one of the main difficulties in the way of a full appreciation of such ancient poetry: the difficulty of bridging over the gulf, not between English and Greek, not between modern and ancient, but between the literature of books and the literature of floating tradition. We and our fathers before us, almost as far back as English literature goes, have been accustomed to the literature that is conveyed to us in books. We are apt to ignore the great Oral Literature, which was not read by the eye, but heard with the ear, and which constituted the whole of poetry before the time when writing, hitherto used for record only, comes to be applied to the conservation of literature. It is a mistake to suppose that such Oral Poetry has only an archæological interest. Oral and Written are the two main divisions in the history of poetry: in one respect Oral Poetry is the more important of the two, for it is in this that the foundations of literary form are slowly laid down.

The phenomena of Oral and Written poetry are widely different; even practised scholars, in referring to compositions of great antiquity, are apt to lapse into expressions that have a connotation of modern conditions. The simple scheme of epic evolution on the opposite page may bring out the contrast of the two. Oral poetry is a floating literature because, apart from writing

Oral Poetry

1. Floating (change with each delivery)
2. Collective Authorship
3. Conventional Echoing

Ballad Stories

Story Fusion

Heroic Cycles

- Argonauts
- Thebes
- Trojan War
- Hercules
- Prometheus
- Persian Wars
- etc.

Written Poetry

1. Fixed by writing
2. Individual Authorship and Property
3. Originality

The Organic Epic

Amalgamation of numerous stories in a common plot

that gives fixity, each delivery of a poem becomes a fresh edition. In such a state of things there is no reading class: the minstrel — by whatever particular name he may be called — is the sole source of poetry, and the minstrel is equally accessible to all. Our modern conditions recognize authors, and protect their individual claims as a kind of property; in floating literature production belongs to the minstrel profession collectively, and each reciter uses the common material without any sense of borrowing. Our first instinct is for originality, and we scout plagiarism as a literary sin. Oral poetry is founded on plagiarism; the impulse to originality has not appeared, and the conventional echoing of common topics and details is the foremost poetic interest. In such floating poetry literary evolution has free and rapid course. First we have the unit story or song. But the life portrayed is comparatively simple, and stories have much in common; in the floating literature it becomes easy for parts of one story to intermingle with parts of another, and a general stage of story fusion ensues. From time to time particular heroes or incidents start into prominence, Achilles becoming the reigning type of warrior, or Robin Hood the popular outlaw; incidents and details hitherto attributed to others now are transferred to these. Thus a third stage is reached of heroic cycles, ever growing aggregations of miscellaneous stories clustering around individual heroes or topics; such an heroic cycle, it will be understood, is not a poem, but a state of poetry. In course of time such an heroic cycle will pass over the boundary line

that brings us to written literature and individual authorship: the cycle has now the chance of growing into an organic epic, its miscellaneous and conflicting details harmonized, as they pass through the mind of some architectonic poet, into the unity we recognize as plot.

The application of principles like these to the present case brings us face to face with the famous "Homeric Question." This Homeric Question is in reality a set of complex and intricate problems connected with the mode in which our *Iliad* and *Odyssey* have come into existence: what are the sources from which the matter of these poems has been derived, what the processes by which their constituent elements have been united; how much, as a factor in such processes, is to be attributed to individual authorship, how much to race migrations, how much to public recitations and influences such as Pan-Athenaic festivals, how much to endeavors after what has been well called an Authorized Version; how much again of modification may have come in between such accepted version and the actual text of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* which has come down to us. Problems like these, it is obvious, belong to specialized Greek scholarship. The heat and perturbation which has been imported into the Homeric Question is largely due to the accident that it was this question which first brought into prominence the distinction between the static and the evolutionary view of literature; between the mental attitude which unconsciously carried modern conditions of literary production into circumstances in which they could have no place, and the conception of comparative

literature which is prepared to find the early poetry of all peoples passing through similar stages. It might well be a shock to the general reader to hear for the first time that "Homer" was to be understood as the name not of a man but of a thing. The case is changed when it appears that the Homeric Question does not stand alone, but is typical of problems that arise in the early stages of all literatures; when, further, it is seen that the same theory which questions the existence of the traditional individual called Homer nevertheless lays emphasis on individual authorship as a leading factor in the processes by which the Homeric poems have been produced. In any case, as has been already said, the problem belongs to specialized scholarship. The main point on which the student of pure literature should fasten his attention is the consideration that, whatever may be the final decision as to particular Homeric problems, our *Iliad* and *Odyssey* unquestionably belong to that golden moment of literary history in which the stream of floating tradition meets the influence of writing and fixity of form; that there results a supremely great combination, between richness of material, accumulated through successive generations, and the organic harmony of plot which, ultimately, is inseparable from individual authorship.

It is not easy for a modern reader to put back the clock of time and adjust his mental attitude to floating literature. This appears to involve two ideas which to the modern mind seem self-contradictory. On the one hand, we must conceive of this epic matter as real history: to the Greeks it is their only history of the far past. It is doubtful if our modern conception of "fic-

tion" — life presented in stories wholly invented from beginning to end — would be even intelligible to an ancient Greek. Thucydides is justly esteemed as one of the world's most profound and subtle historians: what is the attitude of this Thucydides to the Homeric presentation of the Trojan War? He brings to bear upon it his rationalizing analysis: this particular element he considers as exaggerated and tones it down; that detail he questions; for another he finds an alternative explanation. But the rationalizing mind of Thucydides never conceives — what would be the first thought of a modern historian — the question whether the whole matter of Homer from first to last has any verifiable basis of reality, whether there is any conclusive evidence that Troy itself had any existence. On the other hand, the material of this accepted history must be understood as infinitely malleable, capable of being varied at will in all but its broadest outlines. In this we have what is a difficulty to the modern mind. If an English reader has taken his conception of Henry the Eighth from Shakespeare, and then is led to a different conception by the evidence of a modern historian, he must surrender his first idea: the Henry of Shakespeare and the Henry of Froude cannot both be "history." But to the Greek mind they could. When Stesichorus or Euripides adds to the tradition of the guilty Helen a new conception of Helen pure, with the world around her misled by a miraculous simulacrum, the old tradition is not destroyed by the new conception, the two can stand side by side. This union of historic reality and malleability of material makes a splendid medium for thought to work in:

one not likely to recur in the future. We must criticise our history, or offer alternative interpretations. The ancient Greeks criticised by creating; they could recast reality in varied creations without mutual interference. For the attainment of this attitude of antiquity to creative poetry the reading of our poems in the order of the story is a great assistance; from this point of view the order of the story becomes the natural order.

We must, of course, discriminate the different parts of the scheme of Epic and Tragedy suggested above; but for the moment let us consider the whole as a unity. Three points suggest themselves. 1. We have here the crystallization of a widely extended floating poetry in epics and tragedies of consummate literary excellence, the epics sweeping over wide areas of incident, while the tragedies, from varied points of view, illuminate single moments. 2. Again, we have in these poems the embodiment of a grand prehistoric civilization, conveyed in pictures so clear-cut that we can analyze its every part. This comes, not through the purpose of any poet, but by the very nature of poetry itself. On the one hand, poetry does not reflect history, but invents it. On the other hand, poetry does not invent civilization, but reflects it. The floating tradition enriches the result by extending the gathering ground for materials. The history of early Greece was a history of migrations; as peoples migrated from one quarter of Greece to another, their floating poetry migrated with them; floating traditions were worked over by other floating traditions, to an infinite complexity. But what makes perplexity for the scientific archæologist brings enrichment

to the object of literary study: what we have before us is not the embodiment of a single specific civilization, but a composite photograph of many prehistoric civilizations, with added value from elimination of the accidental. 3. One more remark must be added. Of the poetry entering into our scheme we may assert that, in a greater degree than any other part of the world's literature, it has had the prerogative voice in poetic art. This has been true to an extent which makes embarrassment for literary criticism: the poetic practice of this literature was by early criticism exalted into binding laws, against which other types of poetry had to struggle for very existence. The authority of classical epic and tragedy may have been overthrown, but its primacy in poetic art there is no one to dispute. If we are to study poetry at all, we shall surely wish to study it at the fountainhead.

When we distinguish the separate parts of our scheme, what the whole gives us is the thinking of successive and widely sundered epochs concentrated upon a common floating tradition. It is a mistake to suppose that when the literature of books begins the literature of oral tradition comes to an end: the two continue side by side. For a time in ancient Greece the very machinery of oral poetry, the rhapsodic recitations, continued; while Greek tragedies were conveyed to the people from the lips of the actors, not from the books of the poets. But even at a later period, when oral had yielded to written literature, none the less floating poetry continued in the impalpable form we call tradition: a legendary poetry, far vaster in amount than the content

of actual poems, enshrined in the hearts of the people, like an unwritten Bible. Homer belongs to the threshold of Greek history, tragedy to its culmination in the supremacy of Athens: but where the two touch the matter of the Trojan War, what we find is, not that tragedy has borrowed from Homer, but that Homer and tragedy have borrowed independently from the floating literature. Had the tragedian Agathon succeeded in the attempt with which history credits him, the attempt to dramatize newly invented matter, the history of world literature would have been materially different. Apollonius belongs to the late age of Alexandrian criticism; yet for his epic story he goes back to the old cycle of the Argonautic Expedition. With Virgil we have the Rome of the Cæsars and an entirely changed world; yet it seems to Virgil natural to seek material for his Roman story in the same floating poetry which served as raw material for Homer and tragedy. As a planet, travelling vastest regions of space, can never escape from the influence of the intangible points which make the foci of its orbit, so the whole range of Classical Epic and Tragedy, with all its advance in thought and sentiment, is held within the charmed circle of traditional subject-matter. It is hardly necessary to add that this is no case of a barren literary age imitating because it cannot invent. The cause is rather in the wonderful creative outburst of early Greece, the perfect marriage of the highest invention and skill to a wealth of traditional material, the interest of which centuries of subsequent history could not exhaust. And it is precisely this feature which is the distinguishing feature of the poetry we

are surveying among the great divisions of universal literature. Classical poetry is made classical by this attitude to the past: poetic invention and constructive skill concentrated upon echoing the matter accumulated by the poetry of the past, reading new thought and sentiment into accepted subject-matter, just as, in a different literary medium, the modern lyric poet delights to compel his varied and highly individualized sentiment into the straitened form of the sonnet. And this classical impulse was to dominate poetry until, at the close of the Middle Ages, its converse should arise in the romantic impulse toward free invention and search for novelty, and the antithesis of classical and romantic should become a force in the whole future of poetry.

II

Limits of space oblige me to pass rapidly over the first section of our scheme. The cycle of the Argonautic Expedition stands first in the order of story, since its heroes appear to a large extent as fathers or ancestors of those who are to figure in the Trojan War. It is no departure from the general spirit of the whole scheme that I have suggested the combination with the *Argonautica* and the *Medea* of the modern reconstruction of the story in William Morris's *Life and Death of Jason*. For in William Morris, surely, we have our English Homer: supreme creative genius, with the special bias towards crystallization of past poetry in new combinations. In the period we call the Dark Ages literature to some extent relapsed into floating poetry; William

Morris seized upon some of its most precious stories and worked them into the scheme of his *Earthly Paradise.* A great cycle of Norse poetry, in intrinsic power the only peer of Greek epic, waited for its Homer until it found him in the author of *Sigurd the Volsung.* And in the present case we see Morris at work in the field of classical poetry. The traditional treatment of epic has rested too much upon poetic ornament, or single episodes, or heroic figures: we are apt to forget that the supreme element in epic poetry must, from the nature of the case, consist in the shaping of the story itself. And this is also among forms of epic beauty the most elusive. It becomes then a most valuable exercise in poetic art to watch, point by point and from beginning to end, a great master like William Morris working over the material he has received from the past and re-shaping it into an original creation. In the case before us there is the special interest of seeing Greek life change its whole atmosphere for the haze of romance, with touches of the modern brooding on human life. Again, one who essays to combine the matter of Apollonius's poem with that of Euripides' tragedy is confronted with the infinitely difficult problem of reconciling the Jason of the Argonautic Expedition with the Jason of the *Medea;* new material is imported into Morris's poem, and changes of emphasis are traceable in all parts, largely for the purpose of softening down this discrepancy. Incidentally, such comparative study will bring home to the student how classical echoing is widely different from borrowing or mere imitation. To approach traditional incidents just near enough to awaken literary associations, and then to glide

away with unexpected turns of thought or novel reconstructions, this requires the nicest delicacy of touch and mastery of poetic art. It is this more than anything else which has given to classical poetry its charm and technical finish, making it the reconciliation, in some degree, of the primitive poetic interest of convention with the modern impulse to novelty.

III

We come to the *Iliad*. The foundation step in our appreciation of a poem is to grasp it in its unity. In the case of elaborate poems this unity finds technical expression in Plot and Movement; Plot, the unity of a poem considered as a scheme of connected parts; Movement, the realization of the unity in progression from beginning to end of the poem. When we apply such analysis to the case before us, we find just what we should expect to find from the position of the *Iliad* in literary evolution; its plot and movement can be formulated, but we feel at once that such formulation conveys less of the spirit of the whole than would be the case with later poems. The *Iliad* is only just within the field of the organic epic: the traditional interest of the exuberant subject-matter is ever asserting itself, and tending to overpower our sense of the unity bond.

Plot of the *Iliad*

Main Story: Quarrel of Agamemnon and Achilles: developed at length: within the
Enveloping Action: The Græco-Trojan War: involving numerous
Secondary Stories

Secondary stories are narratives within the main narration; these in the case of the *Iliad* make, in the aggregate, a considerable proportion of the whole. We have pedigree stories: almost every prominent warrior, as he is first introduced, must have his pedigree — sometimes a lengthy pedigree — related; we have pedigrees for the sceptre of Agamemnon, for the horses of Tros, for a helmet, for a bow. Again, two personages of the poem are old men, Nestor and Phœnix: the garrulity of age loves to tell feats of the far past, and in the interminable speeches of these heroes the curious analyst may find the involution of story within story to the fourth degree. As the evolution of the epic is the gradual amalgamation of miscellaneous incidents within a harmonizing unity, these secondary stories have the right to a place in our formulation of the plot. Apart from these, the main story of the quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles presents itself as a momentary episode in the larger and not less interesting action of the Trojan War.

When we turn our attention to the progression of incidents through the poem, the conflicting claims of the main story and the enveloping action are such that we must make two statements of the movement of the *Iliad*, according as we give prominence to the one or the other. If we lay the stress upon the main story, then the movement of the poem gives us the art effect of Introversion, the second phase of the movement reversing the order of the first.

Movement of the *Iliad:* Introversion

A. Origin: The Quarrel
  B. First Day's War: The Rampart: Agamemnon's Repentance
    C. Second Day's War: The Bivouac: Agamemnon's Apology Rejected

Interlude of Adventure: Nocturnal Spying

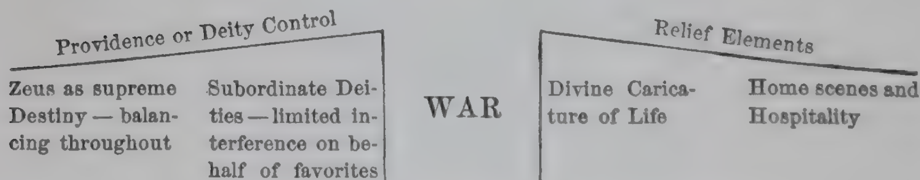
    CC. Third Day's War: Rampart stormed but Patroclus lost
  BB. Return of Achilles: Patroclus avenged and Hector slain
AA. General Pacification: Burial of Patroclus and Hector

The starting-point of the action is, not the sin of one man, but the quarrel of two: the power of authority and the power of personal might have come into collision, and both Agamemnon and Achilles indulge a wrath that will bring consequences. At first, the action turns wholly against Agamemnon. At the end of the first day's war the building of the rampart is an outward symbol that the Greeks have been driven to the defensive; Agamemnon bitterly repents the outburst of insult which has lost him the might of Achilles. At the end of the second day, the humiliation of the Greeks has reached the point that their enemies bivouac in the open air to prevent nocturnal flight; Agamemnon descends to the very depths of apology, only to find his apology rejected by Achilles. But now the action begins to reverse itself and turn against Achilles. The storming of the rampart on the third day brings Patroclus into the field: with the loss of Patroclus

Achilles is wounded in his tenderest part. The next section of the poem gives us Achilles making complete surrender, and returning to the war: only at this price can Patroclus be avenged and the triumphant Hector slain. The final section balances the original quarrel with a general pacification, and the burial of Patroclus and Hector. In the centre of the action, the night between the second and third day brings an episode of relief: nocturnal incidents, with the spying expedition of the Trojans outmanœuvred by the spying expedition of the Greeks, make an interlude of adventure in a poem of war.

Thus the main theme, as announced in the opening lines of the poem, has been regularly developed and brought to a conclusion. But if we let ourselves follow the narration just as it stands, we feel that it is rather the enveloping action of the Trojan War that presses itself upon our attention; and a new statement becomes necessary to do justice to the poetic motives which are actually felt to underlie the course of events.

MOTIVE STRUCTURE OF THE *ILIAD*



Underlying interests of Epic Civilization and External Nature

The dominant motive of the whole poem is the overpowering interest of War. It is a great thing for the

world that the stage in human evolution in which the warrior impulse is the highest spiritual stage attainable by man should have idealized itself in a masterpiece of poetry, before it has passed away to become ever more impossible and unrealizable. Whoever would study this old-world ideal, must study it in the *Iliad*. At first, and indeed all through, we have what may be called normal war: chiefs rousing their followers, the clash of whole armies, personal combats innumerable, rushes of great heroes through the ranks of war like destructive rockets, diversions by arrow warfare or stone hurling; amid these are interspersed more specific martial incidents, such as the suspension of the general battle to give place for a duel, the sudden arrow of treachery, struggles over the divine horses of Tros or Achilles, appeals for mercy, in the thick of combat recognition of guest friends. From the beginning of the third day the movement of war goes through a steady crescendo. We now have concerted movements, such as the five-column attack upon the rampart, and grouped combats, with several heroes of name on each side; there is rampart storming and defence; the rally of the Greeks under the god Poseidon is met by the counter rally of the Trojans under the god Apollo; the firing of the galleys brings Patroclus to roll back the battle to the walls of Troy. Then all seems to merge in contests over the corpses of fallen heroes, especially the long strain, filling the seventeenth book, of both armies over the corpse of Patroclus, amid mist and darkness, with gods taking part on both sides: this brings a sudden climax in the terrible shout of Achilles

from the trenches, as he is seen in a glare of supernatural light. All the resources of combat would seem to have been exhausted; yet a finale is still to come in the addition of mystic warfare, with gods and men confusedly intermingled. From the twentieth book the whole action is supernaturally moulded. Gods in disguise hearten heroes, and then snatch them away in mist. We have the splendid episode of the twenty-first book: Achilles in his heaven-wrought armor helpless against the divine River, that "with furious undersweep overmasters his knees" and dashes cataracts on his shield, until the Fire God is brought to quench the might of the River God. Then follows a mystic interlude: for a time gods clashing with gods fill the whole interval between earth and heaven. And thus, when at last we reach the point up to which the whole action of the poem has been working, the final meeting of Achilles and Hector, it is no matching of hero strength that we find, but a tangled incident mystically controlled in every detail. Apollo has covered the retreat of the army into Troy, while the feet of Hector are "fettered by baleful fate" outside; at the nearer approach of the terrible Achilles the bravest of men turns in panic flight; when he is exhausted Apollo comes to his side; at the signal from heaven Apollo passes from him, and Athene, working for Achilles, plays her cruel deception — the apparition of the supporting brother that brings Hector helpless to the slaughter.

This dominant motive of war is seen to be interpenetrated by other motives; or at times it gives place to other interests by way of relief. Of the other

motives the most prominent is what the modern world would call Providence: the control of Deity over events. Zeus is "steward of war and peace to men": in the *Iliad* Destiny is almost completely identified with the will of Zeus, and its visible symbol of the Balance which makes fate. By the nature of the story we are prepared for a temporary advantage of the Trojans, which is the providential compensation for the slight of Achilles; but we are hardly prepared for the degree to which Deity will sway the whole course of events. In the war of the first day, as compared with what follows, Zeus seems almost quiescent; yet even here it is he who sends Athene to violate the truce, and bring about the battle in which the Trojans can be seen to prevail. On the second day, Zeus in high council of heaven enforces neutrality on the other gods: they chafe against his restraint, yet know him irresistible. Zeus descends to Mount Ida to keep watch. Up to noon he leaves the battle to itself; then he displays his balance against the Greeks, and follows this with the thunder that turns the tide of victory; Hera and Poseidon are impelled to interfere, but are held back; at the prayer of Ajax Zeus gives him the momentary encouragement of the eagle omen, then returns to his purpose and enkindles the Trojan hosts to pour over the trench. On the third day, Zeus sends the demon of Discord to enhance the battle spirit on both sides; the rest of the gods are raging at their helplessness, but Zeus recks not. Again he balances with even sway for a time, drawing Hector out of danger as the Greeks are prevailing, sending Iris to restrain him

until Agamemnon shall have run his course of glory. The wounding of this Agamemnon Zeus has made the signal for the turn of the tide: now he drives even Ajax into panic-stricken retreat, and, with the hurricane of dust against the galleys, carries forward the rush of victorious Trojans to the smashing of the gate. Zeus is now satisfied, and can turn his eyes to other parts of the world: there is opportunity for other disturbing forces to come in. When Zeus awakes from his sleep he sends Apollo to undo the mischief done by Poseidon, and restores the course of Trojan victory. At the prayer of Nestor he thunders a moment's hope, but only to save the life of Nestor himself, for the thunder is interpreted as favorable omen for the Trojans. As Achilles watching the battle utters his prayer to Zeus, Zeus hears half of it, and grants Patroclus to hurl the battle from the galleys, denies the other half, that Patroclus might come back safe. From this point Zeus is seen heartening and disheartening men, overbearing all human counsels. He enkindles the fury of Patroclus to press the battle on to Troy, where he will meet his death; he sheds a sudden mist to save the corpse of Patroclus from the dogs; repenting a moment for the Greeks Zeus sends Athene to kindle their ardor in struggling over their hero's corpse, yet, when Hector comes into the fray, shakes forth his ægis and thunders a triumph for Troy which all can recognize; yet again, as Ajax in distress puts forth a prayer, Zeus dissolves the mist and grants the Greeks the rescue of Patroclus's corpse. The Trojan success vowed to Thetis is now fully accomplished, and Zeus, holding council of gods

and nature powers, bids them take their full liberty: he will gaze from Olympus and gladden his heart with the truceless strife. With this presentation of the will of Zeus as fate comes the paradox that Destiny is seen in the act of hesitation and making compromise. When the course of the battle threatens his own son Sarpedon, Zeus quails in his rôle of Destiny; Hera reminds him of that other fate which lies in the mortality of an individual man. Destiny must compromise: Zeus leaves Sarpedon to die, but will rescue the loved corpse; blood drops of Zeus's agony fall on the earth in crimson dew as Sarpedon falls; he thrills Hector's heart with faintness to draw the battle away as Sleep and Death bear away the corpse. Again, Zeus shakes his head over the sight of Hector putting on the armor of Achilles torn from the dead Patroclus, and we have another compromise of fate as Zeus grants great might to Hector in requital of the doom that he shall not return from the battle alive. At the last moment of Hector's doom Zeus hesitates over a dear and pious worshipper; again the thought of mortal weird is presented to him, and he must display the fatal balance that brings the end.

Other deities also come in as a disturbing force to the natural course of events. These in no way represent Destiny; they are simply superhuman powers, like the demonic forces of later poetry, who, by permission of Zeus or by eluding his notice, interfere for friends or against foes, sometimes directly, more often by momentary incarnations in some human likeness. Athene turns the arrow of treachery aside from Mene-

laus, as a mother brushes a fly from her sleeping child; Aphrodite snatches away the wounded Paris in a mist, and brings him home to Troy; Glaucus wounded cries to Apollo, and Apollo stanches the wound. Apollo in the guise of a friend approaches Æneas, and Æneas recognizes the god; Athene comes in the guise of Phœnix to Menelaus, and has the delight of hearing Menelaus name herself as the divinity he invokes. The fifth book seems given up to such interference of deity. It is Athene who inspires Diomedes to his rush of glory; she leads her fellow-deity, the dull Ares, out of the battle on the plea of their both abstaining from combat, and straightway returns herself to the fight. She gives Diomedes the special power of discerning the forms of the gods in the crowd of fighters. When Aphrodite, rescuing her Æneas in a fold of her bright mantle, is herself wounded and drops her burden, Apollo snatches Æneas up in a cloud, and creates a wraith in his likeness to draw the battle away. Later, Apollo brings Ares back into the fight; Ares in the likeness of a comrade rouses the Trojans, and becomes visible in his own form as he leads on their charge. When Hera and Athene gain Zeus's permission for a moment's interference, Hera with the voice of Stentor rouses the Greeks, Athene tumbles the charioteer of Diomedes out of the chariot and takes his place herself. When the attention of Zeus is wholly transferred to other scenes, Poseidon has his chance to rally the Greeks: in the likeness of Kalchas he inspires their sinking spirits; in the likeness of another he brings re-inforcements; in the likeness of an aged man he urges

on Agamemnon and Nestor. In the counter rally of the Trojans Apollo directly comforts Hector, breathes might into him, smooths the way before him, leads the charge of the Trojans with cloud-veiled shoulders, spurns down with his feet full lightly the banks of the foss: while he holds his ægis moveless the foe fall fast by the shafts, when he shakes it their souls are dazed. On the tower of Troy Apollo three times buffets back the advancing Patroclus, at the fourth advance reveals himself and shouts a terrible warning; in the later crisis he smites the strength out of Patroclus and leaves him a helpless prey to Hector. Taken in the aggregate, these irruptions of deities into the course of human events make a very prominent motive in the action of the poem.

Throughout all the incidents of this type the dominant motive of war has continued. But there are points at which this gives place to relief scenes and literary interests of an entirely different kind. When the whole Trojan War has for the moment become concentrated in the duel between Paris and Menelaus, between the wronger and the wronged, the invisible Aphrodite has but to snap the helmet band of Paris, and the scene changes, as if by magic, to the bower of Helen and passages of love. The formal challenge for this duel has required the summoning of King Priam to pour libations: we get a picture of Troy, of the tender courtesy of the old king to the captive Helen, of Helen viewing from her place of captivity the chieftains of her old country. In the chances of battle Machaon is wounded: at all hazards the warrior leech

must be rescued, and for two hundred and fifty lines we are in the tent of Nestor, with its stately hospitality, varied by a friendly call from Patroclus, and the old host's stories of the past. When the Trojans are being hard pressed, Helenus has but to speak a word of advice and we pass with Hector out of the battle-field to the palace of Priam, to Athene's stately fane on its castled crag, to the dwelling of Paris and Helen and the home of Hector; above all, to the exquisite pathos of the meeting by the gate with Andromache and, though they know it not, the last parting of warrior, wife, and babe, with forecast of the widow's doom. We have again the formal embassy of the Greek chiefs to the tent of Achilles bearing the royal apology, with its interchange of passionate oratory, and the long-drawn appeal of Phœnix for the spirit of restraint and reverence for the Prayers that are the daughters of Zeus. And the reverse side of the war glory is pictured for us in the long scenes of mourning: the mourning for Patroclus dead, with its side-light on the captive women's woes; the wailing of father, mother, wife, and all the folk of Troy over the fall of its great hero and hope; the misery of Priam's embassy to recover the corpse of Hector, and the meeting of crushed father and crushed friend; the final wailing as the body of Hector enters the gate of his ruined city.

But there are in the *Iliad* relief scenes of a very different type from this. Pictures of divine interference in human affairs give place at times to home scenes of the divine life on Olympus: and we seem to read in them parodies of home scenes in the world of mortals.

At the outset of the story Thetis must invoke the interposition of Providence on behalf of the Trojans; veiled in dawn mist, she seeks a secret conference with Zeus; Zeus gives her his pledge, but has misgivings as to what his "brawling queen" will think of the matter. And not without reason: for, though all the gods rise in awe-stricken respect as Zeus enters Olympus, yet this does not prevent a scene of feminine nagging. The Queen of Heaven has marked the nod which has shaken Olympus, and interprets it of a feminine influence outside the family, which she *thinks* means favoritism for the Trojans.

> Ha! thinkest thou? — ever thou thinkest! — thou spiest on me evermore! . . .
> And what if it be as thou think'st? —

The head of the divine household is on the verge of some terrible explosion, but the Halt-foot god, who has had experiences himself in this way, hastens to effect a diversion; his clumsy attempts to hurry around the nectar and ambrosia in the absence of Hebe restores good humor, and the scene ends in domestic feasting, with music from Apollo and the Muses before the gods retire for the night. This is balanced in the fourth book by divine nagging on the part of Zeus himself: "with word-shafts glancing aslant," "mocking with heart-stinging taunt," he lets it be known to the ladies of his household how they are sitting apart from the trouble of their Menelaus, while the Laughter-Queen has rescued her friend. The daughter nurses her wrath in silence, the wife flashes

out. With the fixed convention of Olympus that the gods never cross one another's schemes, Zeus bids the rest do what they will, but let them wait until he has a grudge against some favorite city of theirs. Hera promptly names three famous Greek cities — and we may presume that the rhapsodic reciter would vary the names, with his eye upon his audience—and vows that Zeus may do his worst against them if only she can have a free hand with Troy. When, in the fifth book, Athene gives Diomedes the power of recognizing and avoiding gods in the clash of battle, she makes a spiteful exception in the case of one single deity: accordingly Aphrodite feels herself suddenly stung in the wrist with the point of a mortal's spear. The divine ichor begins to flow, and in frenzy of torment Aphrodite borrows her brother's chariot and flies to her mother's knees, to tell how she has been stabbed while rescuing her darling son; the mother comforts her with the assurance that mortals who fight with the gods never live long, and wipes with cool palms the wounded arm; Hera and Athene look on with hard eyes, suggesting some love passage in which a brooch has scratched the dainty hand, while Zeus bids his darling leave war to fiercer deities. A different measure is dealt out to Ares, as the irrepressible member of the divine family, who inherits his mother's overbearing spirit. Athene brings Diomedes to stab Ares in the battle, the goddess guiding the spear to a tender spot; the brazen Ares yells a yell fit for some nine thousand mortals, and flees in anguish to show the blood to Zeus, who snubs him for his whimpering moan; as a member

of the divine household, however, he is allowed the attentions of the family physician. In the eighth book, Athene and Hera can no longer bear the enforced neutrality, and begin to arm themselves. Iris is sent to them from Zeus, with terrible threats of physical consequences to the daughter, but Zeus is not so indignant with Hera, as she is always crossing him. The goddesses must needs unarm, and sit down indignant and angry-souled; Zeus comes thundering in to dare them and taunt them with their helplessness to resist. At the important point of the story where Zeus turns his attention from Troy to other parts of the world, and Poseidon has his chance to interpose, Hera sees an opportunity for cozening Zeus with wifely charms. We witness a divine toilet in full detail, not excepting the casket of precious ointment, one drop of which if spilled would fill earth and heaven with perfume; Hera even brings herself to solicit love-charms from Aphrodite; when thus prepared she approaches Zeus on Mount Ida, we learn how arts of flirtation can be played upon a husband. Zeus awakes from sleep and perceives how he has been imposed upon, but, ere the outburst can descend upon her, the wife takes refuge in an equivocation that seems to amuse Zeus. At his bidding she returns to the gods, a laugh on her lips and overglooming scowl upon her brow, to tell them there is no doing anything with Zeus; yet she contrives in a parenthesis to let out the news that Ares' son has fallen in the fight, which drives the raging deity to a fury of arming, and his sister must take him by the shoulder and bring him back to a sense of the irresistible.

Iris as messenger bears to Poseidon Zeus's command to drop his interference; Poseidon indulges in tall talk; Iris naïvely asks if she is to repeat this exactly to Zeus, or whether he had not better remember the Erinnyes that wait on the elder-born; Poseidon climbs down, and thanks Iris for a word in season. In the twenty-first book, when the clash of gods comes, Ares seeks a return match against Athene for the affair of Diomedes' spear; but the cast of a rugged rock lays him seven roods' length on the ground, and he learns how far reasoned force is above blind fury. Aphrodite leads her rough lover away; Hera tells Athene, and Athene comes and smites Aphrodite's breast with brawny hand, while Hera stands smiling by. Poseidon dares Apollo to the combat, but Apollo declines to match himself against his much-respected uncle. For this his sister Artemis taunts Apollo with being a coward; whereupon Hera turns upon Artemis, grips her wrists, buffets her with her own bow, smiling ever; Artemis twists and writhes, flies weeping and cowed, and sits on Zeus's knees in sorrowful plight, the vesture celestial shaken with sobs.

In all this are we correctly interpreting the spirit of these Olympic scenes? There is precedent for the wholesale misreading by one age of the poetic spirit of another age: Shakespearean scholarship to-day inclines to the belief that the mad scenes of Shakespeare's plays, so infinitely pathetic to us, were by their own age accepted as so much roaring fun. Yet I believe that in the present case there is no mistake: the natural impression left by the incidents we have been reviewing

is the correct interpretation, and the divine life of Olympus is the comic element in the *Iliad*. There is the parallel of the Satyric Drama, which all through the literary history of Athens concluded each set of tragedies: this Satyric Drama was simply a burlesque. There is the still closer parallel of the Sicilian Drama associated with the name of Epicharmus, and roughly contemporary with the Homeric tradition; this, from what we know of it by history and by the imitation of it in Aristophanes, seems to have used mythology as a mode of satire. The embassy of gods to the City of the Birds is just a political cartoon of ambassadors as Aristophanes saw them in his own times. The word "caricature" etymologically means "overloading": the enlargement of humanity in mythical deity lends itself to the enlargement that burlesques. Nor is there anything in the ancient Greek conception of Deity to conflict with this. In Homeric thought Nature and Man and Deity seem to shade into one another; they are like families which have intermarried. We have personalities sprung from a human and a divine parent; we have divine horses; Iris is the storm-footed go-between connecting heaven and earth. The River God, the Fire God, even Poseidon and Hades, are not, in the *Iliad*, the abstract personifications of our Classical Dictionaries, but a river that floods, a fire that burns, the ocean and under-world that lie about us. Deity is transcendental Humanity or transcendental Nature: whatever we see in humanity or in nature has a magnified counterpart in Deity. Semitic thought, from which our modern spiritual conceptions come, here

contrasts sharply with Greek thought. Semitic thought is distinguished by absence of the sense of humor. It lays its emphasis, not on humanity in its all-roundness, but upon the struggling upward and downward tendencies in man; we idealize the upward element in us as God, the downward element we idealize as something else — perhaps the Devil. But to the thought of old Greece God would include the Devil: intoxication becomes divine in Bacchus; thieving becomes divine in Hermes or the Latin Mercury; Ares, as blind rage, is just as much a deity as the rationally controlled force of Athene. The only mistake in the matter — and it is a mistake into which the modern reader may easily fall — is to see any necessary conflict between this hilarious handling of deity and what is its opposite, equally Greek, the awful reverence for divinity as controller of destiny and vindicator of right. Notwithstanding its comic element, the drift of the whole *Iliad* is ethical, presenting a wrath that is its own punishment.

The movement, then, of the *Iliad* is made by the interplay of such distinct motives and such scenes of relief. But all this by no means exhausts the interest of the poem. The subject-matter of such works as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* has a literary interest hardly second to that of the moulding of the matter by the form. As remarked before, the Homeric poems are a concrete embodiment of prehistoric civilization; and few literary exercises are more interesting than to take the concrete picture to pieces and resolve it into its elements. We can from this source study the social

stratification of antiquity, and the social ideals that this evokes. We can see with what degree of definiteness political conceptions have formulated themselves, what are the mutual relations of the governing powers and the democratic spirit in public assemblies, and in the ordinary administration of life. We can get into touch with primitive religion: can catch its dominant ideas of Destiny and Deity, and trace their all-pervasive influence on daily life; we can follow the religious ceremonials, and see how the high ritual of sacrifice merges in the good-fellowship of the body of worshippers. There is especially abundant material for studying the position of woman in the Homeric age, her dignity in peace, the pathos of her relationship to war; we realize how much closer to our own ideas is the Homeric conception of woman and family life than are the conceptions of these that are found in later periods of history. Precise notions can be formed of Homeric art, and of the material side of Homeric civilization: its cities, its houses and ships, its commerce, its implements of peace and mode of warfare. Elaborate treatises on subjects like these can be and have been written, based on materials mainly drawn from these poems. The whole civilized life that preceded the dawn of modern history has been brought closer to our imaginative sympathy, and even to our analysis, than the civilization we are obliged to call historical.

There is one kind of poetic interest which we look for in all types of poetry — the handling of external nature. On this point the *Iliad* is worthy of special study. In modern poetry of the narrative order we expect to find

direct descriptions of nature, often lengthy and elaborate; and this seems to enter into the poem as an end in itself. Such direct nature poetry is hardly found in the *Iliad*, unless in the very special section of the poem devoted to the sculptured armor of Achilles: here some of the scenes depicted may be called nature scenes. Still less do we find that specially modern treatment, of which William Morris is so great a master, and in which nature is made a dramatic background for incident, changes of light or scene moving in mystic sympathy with changes in events, as if Ruskin's "pathetic fallacy" were being adopted into the spirit of the action.[1] There is one remarkable episode of the *Iliad*, already noted, in which physical nature may be said to enter into the epic action: the contest of Achilles with the River God is a contest with the River itself, and magnificent presentation of nature forces is the result. But as a regular thing beauties of the external world are in the *Iliad* brought into the poem indirectly, by the artificial devices of the metaphor and the simile. The recurrent phrases by which so often mention is made of morning and night are gems of metaphorical word-picturing. In the simile description is on a large scale; a great part of the similes in the *Iliad* are drawn from natural objects. These are of course one of the notable features of Homeric poetry; I would suggest to any reader, who has not already done so, that he should mark in the margin of his Homer every occurrence of a simile; let him then read again these similes independently of the context, and he will appreciate what a wealth of nature

[1] Compare below, pages 328–9.

beauty is by this means imported into the poem. Notable also is the distribution of these similes, and the use made of them. In the *Iliad* we may often read many hundred lines together without finding a simile, except momentary comparisons that carry no pictorial force. Elsewhere the similes come crowding together, treading on one another's heels. Very occasionally, the effect of a simile may be classified under the head of relief effect: such, surely, is the interpretation of the point in book twelve, where, in the hottest moment of the rampart storming, the strain of fighting heroes and flying missiles is broken by a simile of exquisite calm:—

As fall on a wintry day thick-thronging the flakes of the snow,
When Zeus the Counsel-father bestirreth himself, to show
Unto men what manner of arrows be shot from his quivers of cloud;—
His winds hath he hush'd, and he still snoweth on, till his white pall shroud
High mountain-crests, huge forelands that loom through the laden air,
And the clover-mantled meadows, and menfolk's acres fair;
It is shed on the grey sea's havens, it fringeth the rocky shore,
But the surge-sweep keepeth it back; all else is covered o'er
With its veil, when heavily earthward the shower of Kronion doth pour;
So flew thick-thronging the stones by foes fast hurled against foes.[1]

More usually, the simile seems to come as a mode of emphasis: human effort intensified by nature similes seems to take on elemental force. Such is the effect, in the second book, of the Greek hosts smitten with sudden impulse mustering for battle: their flashing weapons

[1] This and the other quotations from the *Iliad* are taken from Mr. Way's translation.

gleam — like a forest fire on a mountain ridge; they pour forth to the plain and halt — like a flock of cranes settling; they swarm over the plain — like multitudinous flies in spring wheeling and dancing round the foaming milk-pails; they resolve into ordered files — like goats severed drove by drove; their hero-king towers above them — like the bull that in goodlihead outshines all the herd. So largely is the *Iliad* the fountainhead of epic poetry that its treatment of the important poetic device of the simile, and the relation of this to the handling of nature beauty, is worthy of all attention. The epic of description is not yet; the epic of action by this treatment becomes a gallery hung round with cameos of nature metaphors and full-length simile pictures of natural scenery.

IV

The *Odyssey* is perhaps the most universally charming poem in all literature. What it yields to constructive analysis is not less striking than its human interest. When it is compared with the *Iliad*, we note the epic evolution which consists in the advancing control of matter by form; there is here no disturbing force of over-luxuriant detail, but every part of the subject-matter has a clearly defined place in the symmetrical plot and movements.

Plot of the *Odyssey*

Main Story: of Odysseus
 Complication: Wonders [nine episodes]: swayed by Poseidon
 Resolution: Adventures [nine episodes]: swayed by Athene

Underplot: of Domestic Life
- The Faithful Six [Wife — Son — Father — Nurse — Swineherd — Neatherd]
- The Hostile Three [Goatherd — Melantho and the Maids — Crowd of Suitors]

Secondary Satellite Stories
- Six Historic Feats of Odysseus [The Beggar — Strife with Ajax — The Wooden Horse — The Boar Scar — The Bow — The Bridal Bed]
- Three Parallels [Menelaus to Odysseus — Orestes and Theoclymenus to Telemachus]

We find in the *Odyssey* what was destined to become the dominant plot form for universal literature, both in epic and dramatic story: the form that describes itself by its technical name of Complication and Resolution. The distinctness of the two elements of this plot is indicated in more than one passage of the poem; what we must call the Complication — the series of incidents leading Odysseus farther and farther from home, and plunging him deeper and deeper into trouble — is represented as under the providential sway of the god Poseidon; the incidents bringing about the return of the wanderer, and the Resolution of the action, are with equal clearness controlled by the goddess Athene. When the hero meets Athene upon his own isle of Ithaca, he addresses her:—

But this I know full surely, thou wert kind a while agone
While we sons of the Achæans by Troy-town fought the fight;
But when the steep city of Priam we had overthrown outright
And went up on our ships, and God scattered the Achæans wide abroad,
I saw thee not thenceforward, nor yet my ship aboard

Did I note thee, O Daughter of Zeus, for the putting away of my woe;
But ever with heart sore burdened a wandering did I go
Till the day when the Gods unbound me and the spell of evil broke,
And there midst the men Phæacian and the very wealthy folk
With words then didst thou cheer me, and me to the city didst lead.

And Athene in her answer explains: —

But look you, I had no mind against Poseidon to fight,
My father's very brother, who had thee in despite,
For wrath because of thy blinding of his well-belovèd son.[1]

There is again a difference of spirit between the two parts of the story: the incidents of the return are sufficiently described by the term "Adventures"; the incidents making the complication are more than adventures; they have a mystic and supernatural color making them Wonder Incidents.

The Trojan War lies, in the *Odyssey*, too far in the past to have any place in the plot. Instead of an enveloping action we here have an underplot: the fortunes of the family and household life of Odysseus are worked up into an interest only second to that of the hero himself. Corresponding to the complication and resolution of the main story we have, in the underplot, the antithesis of the Faithful Six and the Hostile Three. The point here is, not the mere fact that six are faithful to Odysseus where three are hostile, but that each of the nine personages (or groups) as named in the scheme is the centre of a story, which could be abstracted from the poem and narrated independently, with a plot interest of its own.

[1] Book xiii, lines 314, 341 (of William Morris's translation).

Even the secondary stories of the *Odyssey* are seen to have been drawn within the unity bond, till they have become satellite stories revolving around the principal figures. Six of these are stories narrated by one or other personage of the main narrative; but, instead of the miscellaneous narratives of the *Iliad*, they are six historic feats of Odysseus, supporting the characteristic epithet that is continually describing him as *polymetis* — the shifty, the man of resource. In addition to these, we have three stories (or minor portions of the action) which have distinctness given to them as presenting parallels to the main personages. Every reader must be struck by the prominence given throughout to Theoclymenus, who would seem to be a superfluous personage; the explanation is found in the words with which he first accosts Telemachus and claims to be his counterpart, like him an exile oppressed by superior foes. Again, emphasis is given to the story of Orestes, but this is always to hold him up as the great example by which Telemachus is inspired to filial piety. Most distinct of all is the parallel by which, in passage after passage, Menelaus is suggested as the minor counterpart of Odysseus in his life of wandering and final glory. Menelaus's first presentation of himself sounds like an echo of the whole *Odyssey*. —

Yet at least many things have I suffered, and have wandered far and near,
And about in ships have been flitted to come back in the eighth long year.
To Cyprus and Phœnicia and Egypt have I strayed;
Æthiopia too, and Sidon, and Erembian land we made,

And Lybia withal, where the lambs are full-horned from their very birth,
And thrice are the sheepkind yeaning in the space of one year of the earth;
Where neither king nor shepherd may ever lack to eat
Of either cheese or flesh-meat, or to drink milk fresh and sweet,
For yearlong there unceasing they yield to the milking-trough.
But while about I wandered and gat me gear enough,
That very while another was taking my brother's life,
In covert wise and unwares by the wiles of his wicked wife.

Similarly, Menelaus detained by the gods in Egypt has his future unveiled to him by the prophetic Elder of the Sea, as Odysseus is held in Circe's isle, and receives prophecies from her and from Tiresias to whom she sends him. By a final touch of parallel the lives of both these long-wandering men are to be crowned by an end of mystic peace. Menelaus is to pass from his home to the world's utmost end —

Wherein are the softest life-days that men may ever gain;
No snow and no ill weather, nor any drift of rain;
But Ocean ever wafteth the wind of the shrilly west,
On menfolk ever breathing, to give them might and rest.

And Odysseus, who has searched the farthest bounds of the waters, is at the last to pass from his home to the very end of the land world, where men have never seen an oar: —

Then thy death from the sea shall come
Exceeding mild and gentle, and thereby shalt thou fade out
By eld smooth-creeping wasted; and the people round about
Shall be grown all blithe and happy.[1]

[1] Book iv, lines 81, 563, and book xi, line 134 (of William Morris's translation).

The case is similar when we turn to the progression of incidents: the *Odyssey* gives us the type of movement that was destined to prevail in classical poetry. It may be called the Foreshortening of Story: when perfectly worked out, as in the present case, it implies that, where a plot is made up of a complication and a resolution, the movement commences with the resolution, leaving the earlier incidents that make the complication to appear later on, in narrative review. Such foreshortening is practically universal in classical drama: the fixity of the ancient stage made it necessary actually to present only the end of the story, while its earlier part appears indirectly by inference or allusion. And in epic the same treatment is roughly described by the principle of plunging *in medias res,* which to Horace and critics of his type has seemed so necessary a law of epic.

The application of all this to the *Odyssey* becomes clear if we divide the course of the poem into nine successive incidents.

The Council of Gods
Home in Odysseus' absence
Telemachus in search of his Father
The Isle of Calypso
The Phæacian Wonderland and the
    Hero's Story of his wanderings
The Cot of Eumæus
Odysseus as the Wandering Beggar
Catastrophe and Triumph
Winding up of the Story

The poem opens with the Council in Heaven, in which the final return of Odysseus, which is to be the resolu-

tion of the plot, is foreshadowed. The next section serves the underplot, picturing the home in the absence of its lord; when the divine visitor gives her hints to the young son of the house, the final return of Odysseus is being foreshadowed on earth. The third section is the main development of the underplot; but also in this expedition of Telemachus in search of his father we have the resolution of the whole action seen in preparation. The fourth episode brings us to the Isle of Calypso, which is the farthest bound of the hero's outward voyage; when in this isle Hermes comes from heaven to release him, the complication and resolution of the action have met. All the direct action of the poem that follows this is obviously so many stages in the return of Odysseus. But in the central episode of the nine, the Visit to the Phæacian Land, we have the Banquet and Story of the hero, which contains the whole series of wonder incidents making the complication of the plot.

Incident of the Cicones
Incident of the Cyclops
Incident of the Lotus-Eaters
Incident of the Cave of Æolus
Incident of the Læstrygonian Giants
Incident of Circe's Isle
Descent to Hades
Prophetically foretold Incidents of the Sirens, etc.
Calypso's Isle

By a beautiful stroke of story art, this Land of the Phæacians is made itself a Wonderland, appropriate envelop-

ing action for the chain of wonders which Odysseus' story presents.

The poetic interest of the *Odyssey* is transparently clear, rendering comment superfluous. Of the special motives underlying it the chief is connected with the treatment of the wonder incidents. We have here something more than the general poetic interest of the marvellous: touches of detail, too numerous to be accidental, seem to serve as basis for the marvels. It would be a gross distortion of the effect I am trying to indicate if we were to say that the wonders are rationalized. Their appeal is, in the fullest degree, to our sense of the marvellous; yet particular details suggest how these marvels have retained their hold on the poetic fancy; what we get is riddling hints as to the genesis of stories, an adumbration of the coming interest of mythology.

The first incident of the Cicones is so slightly tinged with the marvellous that we may doubt whether it may not be classed merely as an ordinary adventure: the onslaught of Odysseus and his final repulse may be nothing more than the piracy which was an accepted idea of ancient life. If it be so classed, this need not disturb the general course of the movement as described above; the case then becomes this, that the outward voyage of the hero commences in the ordinary experience of a sea-going life, and passes gradually into the region of mystery. At the same time, if the etymological explanation of the name "Cicones" as "Storks" or "Cranes" be correct,[1]

[1] The fact that these etymologies are scientifically doubtful does not prevent their having suggested connection of ideas in ancient thought.

we may see a mythological hint of ancient piracy as part of the migratory element in external nature; a fainter echo of the idea underlying the myth of the "Harpies," or "Snatchers," which in part idealizes the foul descents of piratical wasters. Etymological suggestiveness underlies the names "Circe," the "Hawk" or Bird of Prey, and "Sirens," founded on the root of "drawing": but this is lost in the deep moral interest of the incidents. The name "Skylla" is founded on the root of "rending"; "Charybdis" is compounded of *cha-*, which suggests yawning gulf, and *rhoibdos*, a rushing noise; but here we have also the natural horrors of the octopus and the quicksand intensified. Perhaps the incident which, in comparison with the rest, hangs most unsupported in the region of the marvellous is that of the Oxen of the Sun. Yet here we note that the Sicily in which the incident is located is called in the text the "three-horned" isle. When, further, we note that the herds of these oxen are goddesses whose names — Phaethusa and Lampetie — are founded on the idea of light, that the Sun joys in these oxen as he goes aloft on his way to the heavens, especially that when the oxen are slain the flayed-off skins creep onward, we can see poetic fancy playing upon the idea of clouds as the oxen of the sun, the same idea that underlies the Homeric epithet of Zeus as "cloud-compeller," or herdsman of the clouds.

Three of the incidents call for fuller notice. — 1. The incident of the Læstrygonians might for the most part seem a voyager's adventure of giants and cannibalism, enhanced by the description of the deceptive haven as

a sort of human trap. But this does not take in one element in the description of the region: —

> where herd to herd doth cry
> As he wendeth afield, and his fellow thence coming him doth hear.
> And forsooth a twofold hire might the sleepless win him there,
> And one spell the neat be herding, and one the sheep-kind white;
> For there anigh to each other are the ways of day and of night.

In these mysterious words we seem to have suggestions of some dimly conceived Arctic region. If this is correct, the incident falls into the large class of myths which realize the geographical extremities of the old world as wonderlands of good or evil. The Ocean that is border for the rest of the world has its shore of Cimmerian gloom. On the west we have the wondrous Gardens of the Hesperides; on the far east —

> — the isle Ææan where the house of the Day-dawn lies,
> Where danceth the Mother of Morning and the Sun maketh ready to rise.

This is Circe's isle: the far Orient, with its mystic poisons, is the home of myths that are intensifications of drug powers; to this large class of myths belong, not only the herb charms of Circe and the countercharm of the wondrous "moly," but also the incident of the Lotus-eaters, though in this last case there is no hint of localization. The north appears a wonderland in the "Hyperboreans," who dwell beyond the north wind. The "blameless Æthiopians," in this poem, are "outermost of menfolk," alike on the extreme east and the extreme west. The name of Calypso's isle, Ogygia, is etymologically connected with Ocean; it is described as an isle of the cir-

cling ocean, the navel of the sea, a tree-covered wonderland; Calypso herself is daughter of Atlas, who holds the pillars that sunder heaven from earth: in all this we have an attempt mythically to idealize the extreme "horizon." And we have already had to note the wonder regions of earth's extremities that are associated with the final lives of Menelaus and Odysseus: in the one case, "fields Elysian in the wide world's utmost end"; in the other case, a mystic region as infinitely distant from the sea as the wanderings of Odysseus had led him to an infinite distance from the land.

2. The Cave of Æolus is a floating isle, with a brazen wall unbroken and sheer cliffs; the gift Æolus gives Odysseus is a wallet in which are confined all ways of the blustering winds except the single wind which wafts the voyagers home; when these open the bag, the "whirl-blast" catches them, and they are driven right back to the very point from which they had started. In all this we have the riddle of the "circle of the wind" as it appeared to antiquity: how (in the words of *Ecclesiastes*) "it goeth toward the south and turneth about unto the north; it turneth about continually in its course, and the wind returneth again to its circuits." And with this we may connect the strange detail of Æolus's household, which (be it observed) is presented not as a horror but as a lovely thing:—

Twelve children born of his body abide in his house and hall,
And six thereof are daughters and six lusty sons and tall;
And unto his sons in wedlock his daughters did he give;
And beside their father belovèd and their mother dear they live
In endless feast.

The natural use of wedlock is to take an individual from one family into another: this confinement of wedlock within the family is again the riddle of the wind returning to its circuits.

3. The Incident of Polyphemus is such a *tour de force* of the interest of adventure that we need look for nothing more. And yet certain points reiterated in the description carry our ideas farther. On the one hand, the scene is described as a wealth of pastoral riches — cheeses, whey, curds, rams and sheep, stores of milk; order and method moreover in things pastoral are emphasized. On the other hand, there is a negation of all agriculture, ships or crafts, or travel; negation of law and the meetings of wise men; negation of all care for gods, or righteousness, or fellowship. With this goes the insistence upon the idea of monstrosity: not only the horror of the single eye, but hideousness of scale which makes Polyphemus like a "crag o'ergrown." The spirit of all this is the later stages of human civilization looking back upon the earlier pastoral stage as a monstrous life, as all that is implied etymologically in the word "savage." It is the more interesting from its sharp contrast with the idea which a later age of poetry was to read into Sicilian life, when Theocritus was to start the long tradition of pastoral poetry, and make the shepherd life the conventional clothing for all that was most sentimental and idyllic.

The same treatment can be seen on a more elaborate scale where the poem pictures for us the Land of the Phæacians. There are three notes in the description. In the first place, we are told how the Phæacians once

had intercourse with the gods, how they are of the kin of gods and races of wild-men giants, how they dwelt in time past by Hypereia (the realm on high), where they were wasted by war with the Cyclops who had the mastery. We must remember that the word "Cyclops," used originally of the Sun as the single Eye of the heavens, applies in mythology not only to beings like Polyphemus, but also to the Cyclopes of Hesiod and Virgil, who appear as volcanic forces, with names—Brontes, Steropes, Arges—connected with thunder and lightning. We hear further that it was Nausithous (or Boatswift) who roused the Phæacians, and brought them to Scheria (mainland) and established them there; their fame is their ships, swift as birds, swift as thought; these ships need no rudder, for they know the minds of men and all men's cities; they pass exceedingly swiftly over the sea, in the mist and the cloud-rack hidden; once they flitted Rhadamanthus — the name suggests the tender branch or flower of spring — to the utmost part of the earth and came back again unwearied. The riddling fancy underlying and playing through all this is the conception of clouds as the boats of the sky: cloud shadows can be pictured achieving these mystic passages; clouds broken by the Cyclops-storms are transferred to earth and bring spring flowers, or as boats resume their voyaging from end to end of the world. Accordingly, in the second place, the region of the Phæacians is pictured as a wonderland, one of the paradises in the mystic regions of the earth's extremities, for the Phæacians are "the outermost of menfolk." A third note of interest is found in the end of the Phæacian In-

cident: the penal end when the ship in which Odysseus has been miraculously flitted to his home is, by the jealousy of the Ocean God, metamorphosed suddenly into a mountain rock nigh the land, shading over the Phæacian city, that so they may no longer ferry mortals over the sea scathless. Here we recognize a fixed idea of antiquity — the presumption implied in a sea voyage, familiar to us in Horace's well-known ode,[1] or the wonder ode in Sophocles' *Antigone:* as if the venturing upon the treacherous sea was a tempting of Providence. And it is an exquisite stroke of poetic art that uses this final touch of the incident to bring to an end the enveloping action: we listen to the story of wonders in surroundings which are themselves wonderland, but the door of this wonderland is suddenly closed, and the Phæacians will be seen by men no more.

V

The literary scheme suggested in this chapter combines Greek tragedy with Greek epic. The reader, following through its course the floating tradition, has one phase of it presented in epic form, another phase in a tragedy; upon another light from both sources is concentrated. Different, and often contradictory, presentations of the same matter are set before him. But this only increases the interest of the treatment: few exercises are more suggestive than to compare, for example, the personality of Odysseus as he appears in the *Iliad* and as he appears in the *Odyssey*, and again as he

[1] Ode 3 of Book I.

is treated in the various tragedies in which he plays a part. It is not possible here to discuss the separate tragedies. Nor is there any need: in the case of the modern reader, at least, drama brings home its material closer to the sympathies and discernment than does narrative poetry. All I can do at this point is to offer some remarks upon Greek tragedy in general.[1]

Of the multitudinous forms into which world literature is seen to fall, none is so remarkable, or so highly specialized, as Greek tragedy. It is a many-voiced organ of literature. Two out of the three branches of poetry, Lyric and Drama, enter into it; the Episodes are dramatic scenes in the modern sense, the Choral Odes are pure lyrics. The dramatic and lyric elements alternate, and, in the parts of a tragedy called "Stage Lyrics," the two are fused together: here the dramatic scenes have caught the lyric spirit, and we have the Monody of the actor and the Lyric Concerto (*kommos*) of actor and chorus. The lyric metrės which, in the original and in any adequate translation, distinguish the odes and stage lyrics, are also a signal that these parts would be sung, and not recited. Thus Greek tragedy comes to have its remarkable power of breaking at any point from blank verse to lyrics, from drama to opera, and back again; all these transitions reflecting similar transitions in the spirit of the scene. The third branch of poetry, Epic, appears in the Messenger's Speeches:

[1] A full treatment of Greek tragedy, from the standpoint of general literature, will be found in my *Ancient Classical Drama* (see below, page 487).

here the dramatic passion gives place for a time to the cooler elaborateness of story. In certain scenes known as Forensic Contests the rhetoric which was such a characteristic of the litigious Athenians is allowed full play. Thus all the three forms of poetry, and the spirit, if not the form, of one type of prose, are found in combination within the field of Greek drama.[1]

Again, Attic tragedy is of all poetic forms the most concentrated. The fixity of the ancient stage, not literally, but for all practical purposes, implied that there would be no change of scene; thus the story, the wholeness of which was necessary for intelligibility, had to be focussed upon a single one of its component incidents; only this incident would have the emphasis of direct presentation, all the rest of the matter being given indirectly by narration or allusion. A most singular literary product, again, is the tragic Chorus. This is not, what the word suggests to modern ears, a mere body of artists who perform lyric poetry. The Chorus have a personality drawn from the particular story that is being dramatized, in which they appear as bystanders, sympathizers, minor actors: this personality is never lost, and enters into all the Chorus say or do. This Chorus is further a curious link between the play and the audience who witness it. They have been humorously compared to the gentlemen who go on the stage at the request of a conjurer, at once a part of the audience and a part of the show: so the Chorus of a tragedy, enacting their rôle of bystanders in the scenes, are also in their

[1] For full treatment of the subject of this and the following paragraph compare Chapter III of *The Ancient Classical Drama.*

utterances and action made to voice the impressions which each part of the action is intended to make upon the audience in the theatre. With all this it must be remembered that the performance of a tragedy was a solemn religious service: the "Chorus" corresponded to the "choir" that leads the meditations of a modern congregation, while the dramatic scenes offered a sermon which was acted instead of being declaimed. And the congregation which assisted at such a service was nothing less than the whole city, which in Greek life means the whole people. The total significance of all this is that, in a Greek tragedy, we have the public conscience of a community carried dramatically through the successive phases of a poetic story.

The different tragedies have their various dramatic motives. But one motive belonging to Greek tragedy as a whole is the worship of Destiny.[1] In such a poem as the *Iliad* the supreme power in the universe appears to be the personal will of Zeus: in tragedy the supreme power is the inscrutable force of Destiny. The great dramatic effect of irony is the irresistibility of this Destiny, which mocks human opposition, or uses it as a means of fulfilling itself. There is no contradiction between this and the *Deus ex machina*, with which so many tragedies conclude; in such Divine Interventions the Deity appears, not as Fate, but as the announcer of Fate. There is, however, a certain wavering in Greek tragedy between the conceptions of Destiny and Deity; and this wavering finds expression in the dramas themselves.

[1] Compare *Ancient Classical Drama*, pages 93–109.

O Jove, that rulest the rolling of the earth,
And o'er it hast thy throne: whate'er thou art,
The ruling mind, or the necessity
Of nature, I adore thee. Dark thy ways,
And silent are thy steps: to mortal men
Yet thou with justice all things dost ordain.

Revelation in this religion of Destiny takes the form of oracles, as inscrutable as Destiny itself; hence the oracular action of a drama, by which the movement of events is from mystery to clearness, from the oracle to its inevitable fulfilment. The revelation is in oracles so called, or in prophecy and visions; or we have omens, as momentary accidents foreshadowing Destiny. Or again, there seems to be a supreme revelation of Destiny in the Erinnyes, or Furies, who play such a part in Æschylus's trilogy; these appear as objective beings, avenging unnatural crimes, or subjectively, as the frenzy leading a sinner on to his doom, the fate that haunts successive generations of the House of Atreus. The special religion of Destiny has a correlative in a special type of conscience — the awe-struck caution that, in so inscrutable a universe, fears to move to the right or to the left: such religious caution is ever the dominant note of a Greek Chorus.

The production of Greek tragedies falls within a short period, as measured by years: the three tragedians were contemporaries, Æschylus being half a generation older than the other two. But history travelled fast under the supremacy of Athens, and Euripides seems to belong to a different era of thought from that of Æschylus and Sophocles. This will be abundantly

manifest in the different treatment of his subject-matter by Euripides, as compared with the treatment in other tragedies. Such differences belong naturally to the literary scheme of this chapter, which includes the thinking of successive epochs brought to bear upon a common tradition. I allude to this only to add the remark, for the benefit of readers who may be less familiar with Greek literature, that Euripides is the centre of a fierce literary controversy, which has continued from the poet's own times to our own; and which will probably continue forever, since it involves a fundamental difference, in the minds of his readers, between those whose sympathies are with a fixed and harmonious type of art, and those who are attracted to the art which admits disturbing elements inseparable from mental progress. From our standpoint of world literature all this gives added importance to Euripides. It is hardly too much to say that in Euripides we have the very centre of literary history: his dramas seem to give us the spirit of modern times beginning to work in the field of Greek life.[1]

VI

With Virgil we are in the realm of artificial poetry. We have travelled far from our starting-point, the rhapsodist in an age of song, inspired to give fresh currency to poetic conventions familiar to all around him. We now have a scholarly poet, writing for a circle of cultured readers. And the culture is Greek

[1] Compare *Ancient Classical Drama*, page 160, and following pages.

culture. Few things in history are more interesting than the mutual relations of Greece and Rome. In matters of the outer world the two civilizations are distinct, not to say antagonistic; time moreover has tested them, and it is Roman civilization that has dominated the world, with Greece as one of its subject peoples. But in the world of mind and art Greece has subdued Rome. There is evidence of literary capacity in the Latin language, and those who take interest in what might have been may speculate as to what an original Latin literature might have been under other conditions. As a fact, just when the Roman genius is opening to the higher reaches of thought and art, it finds itself confronted by the fully developed literature of Greece: the Roman genius falls under the spell of Greece, and Latin merges itself forever in Greek culture. To the Roman, philosophy meant Greek philosophy; the spirit of Cicero's writings is a delighted recognition that the thoughts of the Greeks can be conveyed in Latin terms. So to Virgil's age poetry means Greek poetry. To borrow Conington's felicitous expression, classical poetry has become a "second nature"; faithfully to reproduce this takes the place of fidelity to the actual nature that we see around us. Yet to say all this is not to make Virgil an imitator. As remarked before, classical echoing is something different from imitation: it implies some recognition of older material that is also a modification. In the case before us there is something more than this. Virgil is conscious of a theme and subject-matter far vaster, it must seem to him, than anything Greece has to offer.

The Homeric Æneas is not the theme of Virgil's poem, but only a link of connection. The hero of the *Æneid* is Rome itself: Rome as mistress of the world, holding in her hands the destinies of the nations. What the Cæsars have done for Rome in the world without, Virgil is to do for it in the world of poetry. The roots of Rome's career are to be transplanted into the field of Greek imaginative poetry, that poetry which is at the same time history. More than this, all that is implied in Rome and things Roman must be brought into reconciliation and harmony with all that stands as part of the familiar world of Greek poetry; and the Roman element, in being reconciled to the Greek, must also be seen to dominate it.

When we thus catch the general spirit of Virgil's epic, it is not difficult to formulate its plot and movement.

Plot of the *Æneid*

Main Action: Destiny of the Roman People working through the agency of Pious Æneas: a Chain of Oracles harmonizing Grecian and Italian Antiquities

Complicating Action: Hostility of Juno

Resolving Action: Protection of Venus

Episodic Underplot of Love: Dido and Æneas

It is in Æneas, as representing Rome and her destinies, that the action of the poem finds its wholeness and unity. In the working out of this main action there is room for an echo from the *Odyssey:* once more we have a complication under control of one deity, the resolution

under control of another. Again, the *Odyssey* had an underplot of domestic life running side by side with the main interest; here we have an underplot of love, but the underplot is a single episode, the love of Dido and Æneas, which interrupts the course of the main action, until its violent end allows Destiny to resume its sway. There seems no need to find any place in the scheme of plot for secondary stories. It is true that poetic interest has become not less but more various: in variety of appeal to our sympathies the *Æneid* approaches modern poetry of romance. We have the episode of Nisus and Euryalus, with its tender tie between age and youth; we have the giant brethren dying in defence of the gate; we have Pallas, the gift of the shepherd king to Æneas, struck down in the first flower of youth; we have the episode of Camilla as the maiden huntress of Diana's train drawn into the rude struggles of war. All these are elaborated as stories with an independent interest of their own. But the control of form over matter has also strengthened: these episodes at no point diverge from the course of events, but fall into place as so many details in the main action.

When we turn to the movement of the poem, we see at once a parallel to the *Odyssey* in the foreshortening of the story: in both poems the hero's narrative at a banquet takes us back to the real commencement of the action. But the main motive form of the *Æneid* is one borrowed from Greek tragedy. A natural tendency of plot is from the simple to the complex. But in Greek drama this tendency would run counter to

the stage limitations we call the unities; to have side by side two different interests, centring around two different personages, would violate the unity of story. A solution is found in a form of movement that may be called Agglutination: the two interests are made, not parallel, but successive, the second beginning where the first ends; and the two belong to the same personage. A clear example of this is seen in the *Electra* of Euripides. The first half of the plot is filled with the meeting of Electra and Orestes: their mutual recognition is artificially obstructed, and then suddenly effected; such complication and resolution give us the essentials of a complete plot, and the drama might have ended here, with the vengeance upon the common enemy thrown in as a final detail. But instead of this the situation recomplicates itself, in the necessity of two elaborate intrigues for separate vengeance upon Ægisthus and Clytæmnestra; only when this new complication has found its resolution do we reach the finale. A similar agglutinative movement belongs to the *Æneid;* and this type of structure gives the poet an opportunity of making the two halves of his poem reflect separately the two great epics of Greece.

Movement of the *Æneid*

Agglutinative Movement, with common Complication and Resolution

- First Half: Epic Action of Adventure: Exploring a Site for Rome: echoing the *Odyssey*
- Second Half: Epic Action of War: Conflict of Turnus and Æneas: echoing the *Iliad*

With the conscious art that distinguishes Virgil, we have a recognition of this twofold structure in the poem itself: as he passes to the second half of the action there is a fresh invocation of the Muses, and, apparently, a suggestion of war as a more exalted motive than adventure:—

A loftier task the bard essays:
The horizon broadens on his gaze.

It is only when we follow the poem into all its details that we can do full justice to the main action, as an attempt to plant Roman antiquities, small and great, in the field of Greek poetic tradition. The main crisis in the history of Rome was its struggle with Carthage for very existence: the idea of this is made the foundation for the antagonism of Juno, which is the complication of the plot; a temporary cessation of this antagonism, with Rome and Carthage made one by marriage of Æneas and Dido, is the foundation for the episodic underplot. Three times over, in different parts of the *Æneid*, we have the whole history of Rome sketched in prophetic foreshadowing: we find this in Jove's first unfolding of fate to Venus; we have it again in the conversation between Æneas and his father in the Elysian Fields; once again, when sculptured armor is forged in heaven for the Trojan hero, this obvious echo from the *Iliad* is varied to make the details of the sculpture prophetic. In the catalogues of allies who take sides in the war, and elsewhere, we have various portions of Italy, or various Italian peoples — Latium, Œnotria, Ausonia, Etruria, the Sabines, the Rutules —

all treated in accordance with the parts these played in Roman history. Great institutions of Rome — the Alban Games, the Temple of Janus, the Altar of Evander by the Aventine Hill, the Salian minstrel-priests — find their origin in the course of the poem. The Tarpeian Rock, the site of the Forum, appear in their original moss-covered simplicity; objects as familiar to a Roman as Cheapside or Hyde Park to a Londoner, or again small points of Italian geography or popular custom such as would need an expert antiquarian to particularize, are just touched by the movement of the poem as it proceeds. But there is more than this. Troy in Greek epic is the beaten party, and Æneas is brought a fugitive to Italy: shall the majesty of Rome spring from the leavings of Greek conquest? To meet this difficulty, Italy and the site of Rome are made the fountainhead of that Dardan race from which Troy had been only a colony; moreover, the rise of Rome is made, in the counsels of fate, Troy's return match against Greece, by which it is "to quit itself on the Myrmidons and Argives." In the early part of the action, a Trojan prince is already seen ruling over a Greek land. In the middle, the Arcadians — not only a Grecian people, but a people whose very name suggests the age of gold — come forward as chief allies of Æneas. And in the end, Diomedes, supreme foe of Troy in the *Iliad*, is sought in vain by Turnus as an ally: his answer is that all who once opposed Troy have been visited by fate with penal woes. One other point must be noted in this connection. It is before the age of comparative philology: what to us

might seem the easiest obstacle to overcome in the reconciliation of Grecian and Roman would to Virgil's age seem the most difficult — the difference of language. This difficulty is solved at a stroke. For twelve books Juno has maintained her antagonism, and Jove is making one more appeal to her to let fate take its course. Juno takes refuge in a compromise: she will withdraw her opposition to the Trojan domination of Italy if only the Italians may retain their own language. The compromise is accepted, and the action reaches its conclusion.

It is not Rome merely, but Rome as the world's fate, that is the inspiration of the poem: hence Destiny becomes a leading motive of the *Æneid.* From tragedy it draws the oracular coloring of the main action; a chain of oracles runs through the whole movement, mystery heaped on mystery, until at last mystery becomes clearness as the oracles all agree. At the point where the action begins in the fall of Troy, Hector, in Æneas's dream, bids him carry the Penates "beyond the seas." The encircling of young Iulus with supernatural fire removes the scruples of Anchises; the spectre of Creusa gives supernatural assurance of refuge "in the land of the West." When the fugitives make their first attempt to settle in Thrace, the portent of the bleeding tree and the voice of the murdered Polydore bid them fly the curst soil. They seek the oracle of Ortygia, and receive the response that they must go "where first their nation came to birth"; Anchises as depository of venerable tradition interprets this of Crete, from which had come Teucer and

the name of Mount Ida. The Trojans begin a Pergamia in Crete, but the plague appears to forbid. In their perplexity the Penates come to life, and, as spokesmen for Apollo, make known that "the land of the West" has now "Italy" for its name; Anchises recognizes the source of his misinterpretation, and how the oracular doom of Cassandra to be doubted has once more fulfilled itself. Proceeding westwards, the Trojans are driven by a storm to the Isles of the Strophades: there the loathsome Harpy speaks a word of doom, that in the Italy they are seeking "they shall eat their very boards for bread." Helenus, the Trojan prophet-prince, is encountered; he speaks oracles, but confessedly imperfect oracles, since Fate holds him back; it now appears that, not the neighboring Italy, but a distant Italy, is their fated goal, while a long train of dangers line their route. When the Trojans are plunged in trouble by the burning of their ships, the apparition of Anchises points to the Sybil as the source of fresh prophecies; amidst mystic wonders the Sybil speaks oracles, telling of worse horrors on land than those they have endured on the sea, of war and a new Achilles and, mysteriously, of help from a Grecian city and a foreign bride. Mystery is at its height; but, as we pass the turning-point of the poem, mystery comes to solve mystery, and new oracles explain the old. It is to the men of Italy that the word of fate now comes: the cluster of bees on the Delphian laurel is interpreted of a foreign host; Lavinia is illuminated with supernatural flame, as before was Iulus; when the oracle in the Temple of Faunus bids the Latins

look for a foreign bridegroom, two of the oracles have become harmonized in one. As the Trojans alight on Italian soil and prepare their first meal, the horror of eating boards for bread dissolves into a jest. Æneas, sleeping on the very site of the future city, sees the apparition of the River God, who confirms the choice of the spot, and points to the Arcadians as the Grecian people fated to help. When, in obedience to this word, the Trojans visit the Arcadians, they find that oracles have already prepared their way: by the side of the Arcadians are the powerful people the Etruscans, seeking on their own account vengeance on the foes of Æneas, waiting only for the "foreign leader" whom fate has bidden them expect, and who is there in the person of Æneas. All the words of fate have now resolved into one. And it is at this point that the miraculous armor descends from heaven: in its prophetic blazonry the fated glory of the Trojan cause spreads into the far future.

In yet another way the Destiny motive enters into the poem. In the *Odyssey* the personality of the hero is kept prominent by the reiteration of the single epithet — the man of resource. So throughout the *Æneid* we have reiteration of the "pious Æneas." The word is apt to jar upon the modern ear; but the translator, surely, ought to retain the word, and leave the course of the action to bring out in what this Roman piety consists. Obviously, all modern associations with the piety of an inner life are here out of place: whatever else the word may mean, it describes the attitude of Æneas to Rome. This is not patriotism

in the Greek sense, which was local patriotism; nor is it the modern patriotism of loyalty to nation or country or king. Rome is independent of dynasty, of race or geographical distinctions. Rome presents itself to our mind as a sublime Institution: its unit, the household; its climax, world empire. The symbol of this Institution is the Penates: if the etymology of the word makes this "the spirit of indoors," yet we must remember that, as there were Penates for each household, so there were Penates for all Rome. Institutional loyalty of this type makes the hero of this poem. But there is something more in the word than this: it suggests sensitiveness to Destiny. The opening lines introduce Æneas as *fato profugus* — a fugitive with Destiny at his back. And throughout every part of the action the first instinct of Æneas is to catch the finger-pointing of fate. This idea helps us over the greatest difficulty of the poem. By the combined power of Juno and Venus Æneas has been turned from his course, and entangled in a passion for Dido: Fate speaks a decisive word, and Æneas forces himself to desert his love and return where Destiny points. The situation is like the most intense situation of Greek tragedy, in which Orestes is helpless between the Deity who forces him to commit the act of vengeance and Destiny which crushes him for obeying. To the modern reader Destiny is an unthinkable idea: his sympathies are all on the side of Dido. But at least the "piety" of Æneas is consistent with itself: at the cost even of his honor Æneas is true to the Destiny of Rome.

This *Æneid* of Virgil stands last in the scheme of classical poetry which has been the subject of the present chapter. In a sense, it may be said to concentrate the whole scheme in itself. By the constructive skill of a supreme artist, combined with a double portion of the spirit of classical echoing, a complete link has been forged between Greek and Latin poetry. And this same Virgil stands to the Middle Ages as the representative of all that is classical. So far on in time as Spenser's *Faerie Queene* it still seems natural for Britain, or any other European country, to seek for itself a poetic origin by a link with the dispersal from Troy such as that which brought Æneas to found Rome. In the centuries which immediately followed Virgil the world was being both materially and morally transformed; new poetic forces were gathering, which would in time build up an entirely new age of literature. Yet nothing could shake the firm foundations of classical poetry, in which the echoing of tradition was the supreme law. When, finally, the Middle Ages became strong enough for a supreme effort, which should embody in the form of epic poetry the new religion and the whole of mediæval thought, it is Virgil who is chosen as the poet's mentor. Virgil is to Dante the representative of the highest point to which human wisdom can rise, short of that consummation in the Christian Paradise which only One of the Blessed can unfold.

CHAPTER III

THE FIVE LITERARY BIBLES

Shakespeare

NO one needs to be persuaded into the reading of Shakespeare. Of all the world's authors he has had the most universal recognition. The schoolboy finds time for Shakespeare sandwiched in between his Virgil and his algebra; the schoolgirl longs for a costume part in *Midsummer Night's Dream;* their younger brothers and sisters have probably had Lambs' Tales read to them. The popular reciter makes his début in Shakespeare; the theatre manager would play him every season, if finances would permit; the actor's highest ambition is a Shakespearean rôle. Exact scholarship is ready to devote a life-work to this one topic; libraries prepare large sections for *Shakespeareana;* birthday books thrive on him; the pulpit, the lecture platform, the magazine or leading article freely quote him; the most frivolous diner-out takes pains to conceal how little he knows of him. American universities and colleges give Shakespeare a front place in their studies; German universities make him almost a branch of philosophy; English universities edit, annotate, and examine in Shakespeare. The greatest

French poet of the nineteenth century devoted himself to exaltation of Shakespearean conceptions of poetry; most European languages have naturalized the plays in translation. I suppose no one ever framed a scheme of general literary study from which Shakespeare was omitted.

The natural corollary from all this would seem to be that the reader of this book might have been spared the present chapter; more particularly, as the author has had his say on Shakespeare in two lengthy volumes. Yet a brief discussion seems to be called for in order to justify the particular position assigned in this work to Shakespeare as one of the bibles of world literature. It may be asked, How can the writings of a single author be said to cover an area of literature sufficient to justify this term? The answer is found in the peculiarly central position of Shakespeare: central in literary history, central in the balance of qualities that go to make literature, central in the variety of readers this particular author has gathered round him. The mountain top has the smallest of areas, yet in a way the vastness of the whole mountain region belongs to it. If Shakespeare could be blotted out from universal literature, the shrinkage of the whole field would require that our map of poetry must be completely recast.

It has become a commonplace of literature that its greatness in any individual case involves a combination of the man and the moment. This applies with immense force to Shakespeare. We have an individuality in which all the separate elements that make poetry have for once been combined. And the poet has been

projected upon a moment of literary history just calculated to give to this many-sided individuality the fullest possible scope.

I believe in a science of literature, that traces laws and principles underlying literary phenomena as other sciences trace laws and principles underlying external nature. But no literary science will have validity that does not give full recognition to the individuality of authors as an element, or, if the reader prefers, a disturbing accident, of literary law. The psychology of human nature in general can use laboratory methods and make precise statements; that other psychology concerned with the distribution of mental faculties amongst particular individuals must always include a considerable element of what will appear to us accident. And we have here the accident that brings all the powers of poetry together to make one poet. Grasp of human nature, the most profound, the most subtle; responsiveness to emotion throughout its whole scale, from tragic pathos to rollicking jollity, with a middle range, over which plays a humor like the innumerable twinklings of a laughing ocean; powers of imagination so instinctive that to perceive and to create seem the same mental act; a sense of symmetry and proportion that will make everything it touches into art; mastery of language, equally powerful for the language that is the servant of thought and the language that is a beauty in itself; familiarity with the particular medium of dramatic representation so practised that it seems a misnomer to call it technique; an ear for music that makes the rhythm of lyrics, of

rhyme, of verse, of prose, each seem natural while it lasts, and spontaneously varies these rhythms with every varying shade of thought: all these separate elements of poetic force, any one of which in conspicuous degree might make a poet, are in Shakespeare found in complete combination. This sounds unlikely, only because rarity is a form of improbability; yet, were it merely a question of mathematical chances, given the whole field of literature, the impossible combination of chances may occur. That there is this combination of powers in Shakespeare we may perhaps best realize by thinking of other poets who are distinguished rather by special qualities; recall such a poet in his most characteristic passages or conceptions, and I venture to say that somewhere in the field of Shakespearean poetry will be found passages or conceptions that will stand comparison with the special poet in his own specialty.

Or, we may bring home to ourselves the great combination of powers in Shakespeare by remembering how long it has taken appreciation to catch up with the poet. No doubt from the beginning there have been admirers who have found in Shakespeare the perfection of poetry. But, naturally, it has been otherwise with criticism that was committed to theories of art: the history of criticism upon Shakespeare has been a series of retreating attacks. The Shakespearean Drama was magnificent, but it was not drama; it was not regular; it was not this or that. Time has tried the pronouncements of the critics, and to-day our chief interest in past Shakespeare criticism is that we

turn to it at any point to see what portion of literary theory was about to become obsolete.[1] I am far from saying that the process is complete. It is still the fashion to examine the technical art of Shakespeare with analysis borrowed from altogether different regions of poetry, as if to use straight rules for measuring spherical angles.[2] It seems so easy, when something is found that is not obvious in its purpose, to fall back upon the theory of Shakespeare's "irregular genius," and skip the passage and pass on. Yet if we are willing to follow our poet detail by detail, with the same minuteness and fidelity with which a philologist follows ancient literature, we shall find Shakespeare the revealing genius of a poetic art, more complex indeed than any that has preceded it, but in its complexity as full of symmetry, as reducible to form, as the simpler poetry from which our notions of art have been derived.

It must be added that not only do we find in Shakespeare all the elements of poetic beauty and force combined, but we find them combined in even measure and proportion. Accordingly, whatever Shakespeare achieves, he seems to achieve with "the effortless strength of the gods." It is one of the curiosities of literature that this very ease of Shakespeare's writing has made a difficulty for Shakespeare study: great part of the literary world will not be persuaded to take

[1] This is fully discussed in my *Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist*, pages 8–11, 17–21.

[2] The inadequacy to Shakespeare of traditional dramatic technique, and the necessity of a different conception of plot analysis, is fully discussed in the Appendix to my *Shakespeare as a Dramatic Thinker* (below, page 492).

Shakespeare seriously enough. A tradition of him has come into vogue as a good fellow of the literary world, whom everybody loves, but many will not believe that one who has been such a *bon camarade* to them can really be the exalted personage that some maintain him to be. Some difference surely ought to be made to them by the history of opinion, and the steady set of its current in the direction of fuller and fuller appreciation of the poet. A few generations ago, it was not unusual for those who had used the strongest language to express the greatness of Shakespeare to add that of course, as an imperfectly educated man, he was faulty in his grammar and expressions. They did not live to see the time when scholars of front rank would devote years to the production of Shakespeare Lexicons and Shakespeare Grammars, bringing out how it was as natural for Shakespearean English to differ from other English, as for Homeric or Hellenistic Greek to differ from Attic Greek. Or again, it was a widespread idea that, whatever else this poet might be, he was certainly not a learned man. Yet we have seen an erudite bishop writing a treatise to show, not only Shakespeare's intimate knowledge of the Bible, but also the precision of his references to matters of systematic theology; a Lord Chancellor of England arguing, from internal evidence, that the author of the plays must have had a conveyancer's training; Dr. Bucknill, as a specialist in mental disease, convinced that the dramatist must have been an experienced specialist in this line; a thick volume bringing out of the plays an expert's knowledge of ornithology; in

fine, every one who has a specialty seems to find that Shakespeare had it before him. We are driven to revise our opinion of what learning may be. An ideally learned man is not a man who knows everything — that is a schoolboy's ideal — but one who instinctively understands exactly how far he must know the things he touches, and how far he may leave knowledge of them to the specialists. If from this point of view we compare the poet with the prodigies of his day, the Ben Jonsons and Bacons, it is now Shakespeare who appears the learned man, Ben Jonson or Bacon the pedant.

The difficulty of fully appreciating Shakespeare is further enhanced by the fact that we get no help in this matter from biography. Of course it is natural to search for information of this kind in all directions, to rake together the embers and make what flame we can. And I do not undervalue the laborious researches of those who have specialized in Shakespearean antiquities: their results make a greater total of knowledge about the poet's life than general readers recognize. But when all is said and done, the attempt to construct a biography of Shakespeare is a failure. I do not mean merely that what has been ascertained fails to explain the plays; it fails to give us any personality at all that we can understand and know. Such a situation of mystery has proved a great temptation to amateurs of the literary world: they have rushed in to kick away the plank of known facts, and plunge into speculation as to some other personality that might be put in Shakespeare's place. They do not seem to see that their con-

jectures, even if they had foundation, would leave the problem just as great a problem as ever; that even Bacon himself, with all his greatness, is yet a much more limited personality than the personality at the back of the Shakespearean dramas. Shakespearean scholarship has never taken such discussions seriously. They may have brought out for us many things: as, for example, that the best riddles are those that have no answer, prolonging indefinitely the interest of guessing; or again, how convincing evidence can be, if only cross-examination is kept out of the way; or again, how poor a thing is the glimmer of ascertained knowledge in comparison with the fascinating process of turning a searchlight of Iago-like suspiciousness in every direction through the region of the not-impossible. Meanwhile the poet has been brought no nearer to us. It seems wiser to give up the hope of explanation from the biographical source that will reveal the many-sided individuality of Shakespeare: by the poet's works only do we know him.

We are on surer ground when we go on to the second point, that Shakespeare belongs to a moment of literary history such as presents the freest field for the realization of all his many-sided powers. He may be classified as belonging to the earlier part of the Renaissance. The Renaissance is the meeting-point of two great historic ages: the period of the Middle Ages, reaching its culmination, is confronted with the age of Greek and Roman antiquity, hitherto dimly known, now coming with a flood of light, as classical literature in the original languages is more and more brought to the attention

of western Europe. Hellenic antiquity had risen to the highest elevation of thought and art. The Middle Ages, viewed from our standpoint, seems in its earlier course to present society as lapsing into semibarbarism. Yet to the Middle Ages belongs the consummate achievement of Gothic architecture; it has given the world the progressive and inexhaustible art of modern music; it includes the most subtle of all intellectual eras, the age of the schoolmen; in the Middle Ages was evolved the dominant philosophy of human life that is latent in Christianity. If the term "Renaissance" be extended to include the whole of the transition from mediæval to modern, then Shakespeare belongs to a time when this Renaissance is still incomplete. But the meeting of such mighty forces as mediæval and ancient thought must inevitably produce conflict; with conflict come antagonisms; men take sides, and, for a time at least, there is a narrowing of sympathies. The life of Shakespeare falls within the period when the Renaissance was exerting its full influence in the stimulation of thought and art, and before the time of the great schisms with their restraint of outlook.

The literary product of Greek and Roman antiquity is known as classical; and no part of it is more important than classical drama. If the characteristic literature of the Middle Ages is to be described by a single term, this must be "romance," the word being made duly elastic to serve the purpose. Now, the department of poetry to which Shakespeare makes his contributions is the Romantic Drama: what the term implies

is the dramatization of romances. We see two elements of a great combination, and the influence which, in part at least, served to bring them together. The romantic element is found in the sources of Shakespeare's plays. He is not a poet of the type of Shelley or Philip Bailey, who evolve out of their inner consciousness purely ideal worlds. All the material on which he works Shakespeare draws from the story-books of romance; the term of course includes histories — the chronicles for later times, Plutarch for antiquity — which the thinking of that age did not differentiate from stories. The dramatic element was the new interest of classical drama. But an influence can be seen tending to bring the two together. Unlike some other types of Elizabethan drama, Shakespeare's was distinctly popular poetry; and the people for whom he catered was a populace trained for generations by the Mediæval Drama of the Miracle Play and its offshoots. This Mediæval Drama was the dramatization of story, the realization in dramatic scenes of the sacred stories of the Bible or the saints. In the same way the Shakespearean drama sought to realize in dramatic form the popular stories of romance, with an added impetus from the new interest of classical drama.

The more this crystallization of literary elements is examined, the richer will seem the poetic capacities of the product. We have already seen how important for Homer was the floating poetry which, through many generations, was accumulating material for individual genius to work upon. But the Middle Ages was a far vaster gathering ground of literary material. In its

earlier centuries floating poetry and the minstrel reappear; the wandering minstrels carry the story wealth of each people to all other peoples; to this there is the wealth of classical story to be added, and the new interest of story that comes with diffusion of Christianity. No doubt, with the beginning of the modern European languages other types of poetry arise; but from first to last the dominant popular interest is narrated story, in which there is nothing to interfere with fulness of narration, and free interchange of light and shade. And such is the content of the story-books of romance from which Shakespeare drew. In sharp contrast with this is the concentrated poetry of classical drama, in which the interest of a story as a whole was sacrificed to making its final phase dramatically emphatic. The combination of the two elements in Shakespeare means that upon the inexhaustible story interest of romance the concentrated power of dramatic emphasis was brought to play. The influence of the audience was twofold: not only did it stand, as we have seen, for the dramatization of story, but, as a popular audience, it insured the absence of all critical limitations such as had by fixed principles retarded development in Greek drama. And there is yet another condition of poetic force to be added. If life is to be presented on a large scale, the picture must betray the philosophy underlying human experience; however highly endowed in other respects a poet may be, his product may yet be dwarfed if he has a shallow or a morbid philosophy of life. It is only necessary to compare the Shakespearean with the ancient drama to see how much o

force was brought to Shakespeare's age by the conception of human life embodied in Christianity. The literary importance of Protestantism does not consist in its theology, but in the fact that it gives free course to the magnificent literature of the Bible. For Shakespeare this influence had reached its full power, before Protestantism began to stiffen into Puritanism, with its narrowed views and final hostility to all sense of art.

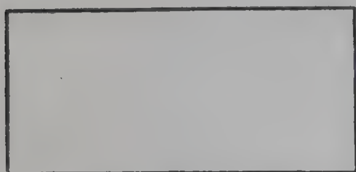
This is no place for detailed discussion of plays.[1] But a moment's consideration given to fundamentals of Shakespearean art will confirm the view of its limitless capacity and scope. The conception of plot found to underlie Shakespearean drama may be formulated thus:—

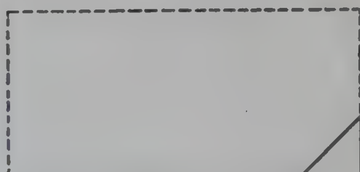
Shakespearean Plot is { (1) a federation of [classical] unit-plots:
(2) with the units [romantically] expanded.

We see at once the interaction of classical and romantic influences. Shakespearean dramas are obviously harmonizations of several different stories in a single dramatic scheme, any one of these stories, abstracted from the rest, affording sufficient material for a complete plot, as plot was understood in classical drama. More than this, each separate story, as handled by Shakespeare, may contrast with classical treatment of story in that it is expanded in full detail from beginning to end by the influence of romance. To put this graphically. In the subjoined figure, if we take a horizontal line to indicate

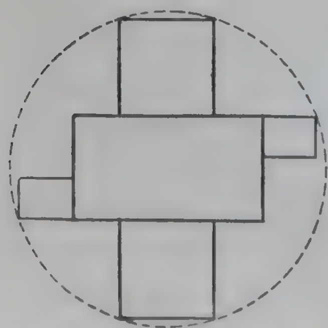
[1] Plot analysis, on the principles discussed in this paragraph, is applied to all the dramas of Shakespeare in my *Shakespeare as a Dramatic Thinker* (below, page 492).

succession in time, and a vertical line to indicate variety in place, then a rectangle will symbolize a full story, which will involve a succession of incidents happening in a variety of places. But this rectangle must be modified to





express the plot of a classical drama: only one corner of the rectangle (so to speak) will be acted on the stage, a single final incident in a single scene; the rest of the story (as represented by the dotted line) must be left for inference and indirect suggestion. But the stories entering into a Shakespearean plot need the full rectangle to represent them; with Shakespeare's multiplication and changes of scenes the whole matter of the story from first to last will appear, or as much of this as is dramatically effective. A figure that would symbolize a Shakespearean plot must represent several such rectangles in some scheme of relation, as so many stories fully presented on the stage; what is here left for inference and suggestion, as indicated by the dotted circle, is the sense of harmony embracing these stories and making them into a dramatic whole. No conception of plot could offer a larger scope for the varied powers of a poet.



It is not essential to the argument, but it is an interesting addition to it, that a recognition of this varied capacity of the Shakespearean drama seems conscious on the part of the poet himself. There is no need to urge — what is no doubt true — that the classical drama, as we know it in the hands of the Greek masters, hardly reached Shakespeare, and that he knew it only in the modified form of Roman drama. The point is, not the direct imitation of models, but the awakening effect of the contrast between classical and romantic treatment. The barest conception of classical concentration, in contact with the contrasting interest of free narrative in romance, must awaken a sensitive poetic mind to the widest variety of constructive possibilities. That Shakespeare's mind was filled with ideas of this kind is sufficiently evidenced by a single passage, in which he puts a humorous literary catalogue into the mouth of his Polonius: —

> The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited: Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men.

Here we see the mind of Shakespeare alive to the literary phantasmagoria made possible by the jostling together in his age of particular types of drama and particular types of story. He has caught the essential distinction of classical and romantic in his phrase, "scene individable, or poem unlimited." Possibly, though not necessarily, we may see a hint of the mingling of serious and light matter in the reference to Seneca and Plautus.

Above all, Shakespeare has got down to the basic idea of literary criticism, "the law of writ and the liberty": an idea he so phrases as to make it an echo of the fundamental moral issue in the New Testament phrase of "law and liberty." And Shakespeare himself takes his stand for the "liberty of writ"; he has elected to give free play to his myriad-sided genius, as it works upon the limitless material brought to him by the reading taste of his times.

CHAPTER IV

THE FIVE LITERARY BIBLES

Dante and Milton: the Epics of Mediæval Catholicism and Renaissance Protestantism

IN constructing a scheme of world literature no one, I presume, would omit Dante. Yet Dante's great poem gains infinitely if it be read in antithesis with the *Paradise Lost* of Milton. It is no comparison of merit that I have in mind. Both are poets of the highest order; master minds, with whom to suggest gradations of rank would be an impertinence. But in their two great works these poets are not treating special themes; each is giving his poetic construction of the sum of things as seen by him. And each is fully equipped for the task. The two poems then will differ according to the two ages they are reflecting; and these two ages are ancestral periods in our own mental history. What makes the combination of the *Divine Comedy* and the *Paradise Lost* into a literary bible is that they give us complete revelation in creative poetry of supplementary stages through which our own literary evolution has passed; they enable us to think the thoughts of the men of those times, to look upon the universe with their mental attitudes, to live over again for a moment their sympathies

and antipathies, to shape the appearances and impressions of things as these seemed to eyes that at the time actually looked upon them. No means of insight into the far past is so potent as creative reflection, where the poetry of the right kind is to be had. For such poetry is philosophy raised to life. All that the apparatus of scientific and philosophic history can give us is anatomy and physiology applied to the body of some past era: in creative poetry we are in contact with its soul.

I

Dante is the prophet of the Middle Ages. The term is often used negatively, as describing a period in relation to what comes before and after. But, as we have seen, it has also a great positive significance; the hazy outlines of the Dark Ages at last took form as a mediæval era with an individuality and consciousness of its own. Dante came at just the right moment to voice that consciousness. Had he lived a generation earlier, Dante might still have said much that he has said, but assuredly he would have said it in Latin. Had he lived a generation later, we must think that questionings and novel problems would have disturbed the serene wholeness of the ideas he shapes. In discussing mediævalism in the Introduction to this work we saw that three factors were involved. One was the unity of all civilization in the Catholic Church. Dante's poem is the representation of Catholicism in high literature. We who look upon Catholicism with the eyes of the present time are apt to associate it with the idea of intellec-

tual restraint, full liberty of thought being surrendered in the interest of some higher spiritual good. There is no suggestion of this in Dante. From beginning to end his poem breathes the spirit of absolutely free speculation; there is no sense of restraint, because the poet's spirit is in perfect harmony with the forces that are moulding Catholicism. The second factor of mediævalism is the shifting units of feudal society within the organization of the Roman Empire, an Empire as closely involved with the Church as the body is involved with the soul. Of this political theory Dante is the main exponent. His prose writings are the classical source for the doctrine of the Holy Roman Empire; and in the second heaven of the *Paradise* Justinian, as representative of law and social organization, proclaims the doctrine as the backbone of history, secular and sacred. And the third element at work in the Middle Ages—rather perceived afterwards than consciously recognized at the time—was the formation, by linguistic changes, of the European nations, political units of the future. Dante was the passionate herald of the new Italian language, founder alike of Italian poetry and prose. He is the morning star of the movement that has created modern literature, by the difficult first step of raising the vernacular of the different peoples into an organ of expression that might equal the Latin and Greek of the old world.

Dante is the revealer of the Middle Ages because the *Divine Comedy* is the supreme example in literature of symbolic poetry. No doubt it is possible—so strong

is Dante in imaginative mechanism — to read the poem apart from its symbolism. It is possible for a reader to be drawn to the first part of the poem by a fascination as of a horrible dream. In this spirit he may follow Dante in his pilgrimage through the world of the lost, turning ever to the left: through regions of oppressive atmosphere and noisome stench, tear-soaked champaigns, blood rivers and dolorous woods of poison trees; darkness lit up with red-heated tombs or rain of fire flakes on sandy wastes; with glimpses of agonies and distorted limbs, serpents and men agglomerated, primeval giants, and the supreme horror of Lucifer. He may have a sense of an oppression lifted off as he follows the poet through the sweet sadness of Purgatory, turning ever to the right; clambers with him the steep mountain side, or waits through nights in exquisite valleys where angelic protection wards off the dread serpent; hears converse the prisoners of voluntary torment, while at times the whole mountain trembles with sympathy as one more sinner has regained spiritual freedom. Or the reader feels his imagination spurred to follow the graded glories of the *Paradise*, lifted from height to height by intensifying brightness in the eyes of Beatrice, conversing with beings swathed in robes of light that reflect every emotion, sensible of never flagging crescendo of light and motion until the central rest of the universe is found in the Beatific Vision. All this is possible, and I do not doubt that the poem is often so read. But this does not give us the true Dante. We know that the *Hell* is not a hideous dream, nor a product of creative fancy. Its details are not to be read as

facts at all, whether observed facts or facts suggested for a region beyond our sight. All the details are realizations in concrete parable of a deeply meditated and harmoniously developed theory of sin, and of the reactions of sin in a universe of free will; often the significance is obvious, and where this is not the case the details become so many symbolic riddles, to dwell on which takes the mind to the depths of moral and spiritual truth. So the details of the *Purgatory* — as the poet has expressly informed us — are not limited to what may be supposed beyond the grave, but go to build up a full and rounded Doctrine of Penance, as penance is in this life and that which is to come. And even the disposition of the celestial regions, however they may harmonize with the objects of faith they are seen to encircle, is none the less founded on the metaphysics of mind and matter. It is, then, because Dante's poem is so saturated with symbolism that it has become the expression of the Middle Ages. For to the mediæval mind symbolism is the highest form of truth. Our own age rests its conception of truth on a foundation of observed facts; the age of Milton, we shall see, looks to literature for its basis of truth. But to the mind of the Middle Ages the cogency of things was found in what the things symbolized. The miracles and lives of the saints, or the relic-worship of the mediæval Church, these often suggest to a purely modern mind the question how mankind could possibly be so credulous. But to ask this question is to lose historic perspective: to the piety of the Middle Ages things were convincing not by the evidence on which they rested, but the spiritual truth they

were capable of revealing. And so Dante's poem makes its appeal neither to fact nor to beauty, but to the order and symmetry and completeness with which its ideas are built into a system.[1]

This is not the place to analyze the symbolism of the poem: what I am insisting upon is that to read Dante with our eyes open to this is the best way of bringing our minds in touch with the thinking of an age which has helped to mould our thought. All that we can do at this point is to notice some of the specially mediæval elements that have entered into the thought of the poem. And first: we see that the geocentric arrangement of the universe has been taken by Dante without question. The mind of man has never been called upon to make a greater leap than that from the old to the new structure of the universe; the call to reject what our senses make of all things the most evident, and to realize that things visible are the opposite of what they seem. The geocentric cosmogony enters into the *Divine Comedy* with such clearness that it can be pictured, and mapped to scale; we know it all, from the frozen centre of earth, tenanted by Lucifer, through rings of encircling elements and heavens, until a region is reached where space ceases to be. With this naturally goes another idea,

[1] The clearest treatment of Dante's symbolism, and the best companion to the poem as a part of world literature, is Mrs. M. F. Rossetti's *Shadow of Dante*. A formal digest of the symbolism by an Hegelian philosopher is the late Dr. W. T. Harris's *Spiritual Sense of Dante's Divina Commedia*. Dean Plumptre's translation is accompanied with copious notes, such as are absolutely required by modern English readers. For publishers of these works, see below, pages 485–6.

that expressed by the difference between the words "astronomy" and "astrology." It is the astrological train of ideas that pervades Dante's poem. The heavens are kept continually before us. If we ask of Dante the time of day, we are likely to get a bewildering answer.

Even as when he darts his earliest rays
  There where his Maker shed for us His blood,
  While Ebro's stream 'neath lofty Libra stays,
And Ganges feels its heat at noon renewed,
  So stood the sun.[1]

That is to say, it was sunrise at Jerusalem, and therefore sunset on the Mountain of Purgatory, with noon in India, and in Spain midnight, with the sign of Libra in the meridian. Beatrice in Paradise, asked a question, pauses a moment before she answers: the moment of pausing must be translated into astral terms.

When both the children of Latona old,
  In shelter of the Ram and of the Scales,
  The zone of the horizon doth enfold,
As is the time when from those balanced scales
  They part, both one and other, from their place,
  Till, changing hemisphere, the balance fails,
So long, with look which winning smile did grace,
  Was Beatrice silent.

Most of us need the commentator's explanation, that she paused for just the instant it takes for sun or moon to rise above or sink below the horizon, at the moment of equinox, with the sun in Aries and the moon in Libra.

[1] Quotations from Dante are from either Longfellow's or Plumptre's translation.

And the heavens thus continually pictured are the heavens of astrology —

— those great wheels,
That destine every seed unto some end,
According as the stars are in conjunction.

We have revolving heavens, moved by angelic intelligences, impressing their influences on human souls. It is at once most important and difficult for the modern mind to recover this astrological point of view, from which even Bacon could never separate himself. We are apt to think of astrology as *putting into* different parts of the material universe meanings and influences which do not belong to them. The reverse is, of course, the fact: modern science has *taken out* from large part of the sum of things the spiritual element it had been conceived to possess. Astrology goes back to the earliest thinking, that did not realize an impassable gulf between mind and matter, such as becomes to our thinking more mysterious the more we study it. Astrology is thus the foundation of what seems to us mysticism. It gives to the universe of Dante a unity that embraces in symmetrical harmony the whole scale of things, from crass matter, through intelligences and pure spirits, up to Deity itself.

Of course, the Catholic Religion fills the poem: its officers, its types of devotion, the frame of mind it fosters. Its Latin hymns and psalms can be familiarly quoted by their initial words: —

— the Angels sang,
Suddenly, "*In Te, Domine, sperari*":
But beyond *pedes meos* did not pass.

Catholic creeds and catechisms, and the whole corpus of its doctrine, are here found erected into a poetic system. The theology of the Fathers, Doctors, Founders of monastic orders, makes great part of the conversation in the spheres of Paradise. Scholasticism, the mediæval philosophy founded on the fusion of Christianity and Aristotle, has full play; not its doctrine only, but its methodical phrasing of truth. The Imperial Idea, which, as we have seen, was one of the foundations of mediævalism, comes into this poem as an article of faith. To such an extent is it carried that Dante seems to feel no difficulty in shedding glory even over the third Cæsar[1]: apparently, his imperial position is made to give the monster Tiberius a place in the Divine plan of human salvation, since only the universal Emperor could have given, through his inferior officers, the sentence that made the death of Christ representative of the whole world. It is in the same spirit that Brutus and Cassius, assailants, though from patriotic motives, of the first Emperor, are linked with Judas Iscariot in the lowest hell of traitors. And another element that has a large place in the material of Dante's poem is classical antiquity, as summed up and personified in Virgil. Virgil, standing for the consummated art and knowledge of antiquity, and for the enunciation of Roman imperialism, and again for the comprehension of all this in the form of epic poetry, is the natural conductor of Dante through all the region subject to human wisdom, unto the

[1] *Paradise*, vi. 84–92.

boundary line where celestial wisdom descends from on high in the person of Beatrice.

Another characteristic feature of this mediæval poem is the poet's delight in metrical bondage. European poetry opens with the Troubadours, whose songs — closely associated with music — tend to be *tours de force* of metrical ingenuity. A higher note is struck when Italy invents the sonnet: this becomes a supreme type for a whole class of literature, in which the form is fixed as a mould, and the most varied matter must become pliable and fit this mould. Bondage like this is the despair of the pretender to poetry, yet seems to inspire the great poets. Dante was the first great master of the sonnet. And the metrical system of the *Divine Comedy* seems to be the spirit of the sonnet enlarged. Its unit is the *terza rima,* just such as might make an integral part of sonnet structure; Dante had to master this difficult unit, until he found its limitations inspiring. Then, just in the spirit in which a sonnet is built up, Dante assigns to the three necessary divisions of his theme thirty-three cantos each, each canto ending with the same word, *stelle;* an additional canto in the introductory part brings the whole up to the perfect number of one hundred cantos. And all this is conscious art.

If, Reader, I possessed a longer space
  For writing it, I yet would sing in part
  Of the sweet draught that ne'er would satiate me:
But inasmuch as full are all the leaves
  Made ready for this second canticle,
  The curb of art no farther lets me go.

This delight in measured symmetry extends from the metre to the matter of the poem. We have, not only a daily, but an hourly itinerary of the mystic journey. We know how the vision began in the early morning of Maundy Thursday; it was evening when Hell was entered; we know at what hours on Friday and Saturday certain parts of the infernal scenery were being traversed; with Easter dawn is the reëntrance to the upper world and the precincts of Purgatory; each day and night is fully accounted for, until on Easter Wednesday the ascent begins into heavens in which earthly time may be forgotten.

Side by side with the strength of mediævalism the poem also reflects its limitations. An element of prose comes in with scholasticism: not necessarily with the doctrines, but with the scholastic form in which they are introduced. A critic objecting to the Divine scheme of redemption as enunciated in the heaven of Milton's *Paradise Lost* puts it that —

> God the Father turns a school divine.

There could not be a more pointless sneer as regards Milton's poem: whatever his theology may be as theology, the expression of it in the Council in Heaven takes us to the style most remote from the style of the schoolmen, and breathes a dignified simplicity that is the highest eloquence. But it is otherwise with Dante: he clearly delights in scholastic formalism and the "strangeness of terms" which to the men of the Renaissance seemed to identify mediæval philosophy with barbarism. Throughout the poem abstruse mysteries

are being expounded, and the exposition is announced beforehand, and treated with the regular divisions of logic. In the highest heavens Beatrice breaks off her rhapsody to correct a doctrine of the schools. The conversation between Virgil and Dante is the intercourse between a master and his bashful scholar, punctuated with rebukes not called for by errors but to keep up the magisterial dignity. Dante in Paradise is put through a catechism with all catechetical formalities.

> As baccalaureate arms himself, and speaks not
>   Until the master doth propose the question,
>   To argue it, and not to terminate it,
> So did I arm myself with every reason,
>   While she was speaking, that I might be ready
>   For such a questioner and such profession.

Asked, What is Faith, he quotes the well-known words from the *Epistle to Hebrews*, and adds,—

> And this appears to me its *quiddity*.

He confesses the three Persons in one Essence of the Holy Trinity, and concludes the sentence:—

> — so one and trine
> They bear conjunction with both *sunt* and *est*.

Where in another place there is reference to this same theological mystery, it is added:—

> Mortals, remain contented at the *Quia:*

that is, the scholastic *demonstratio quia* as distinguished from *demonstratio propter quid.* The demonstrative power of Holy Scripture is referred to as a "syllogism,"

and the Old and New Testaments as the ancient and new "postulates." Adam in Paradise is made to speak of Divine light as —

— the truthful Mirror,
That of Himself all things parhelion makes,
And none makes Him parhelion of itself.

Further, though the devoted admirer of Dante will hardly admit it, there is to most readers another prosaic element that breaks into the lofty tone of the poem: this is the interruption of what must be called small politics. The Middle Ages show at their worst in the factious struggles of Guelf and Ghibelline; and these were the political atmosphere in which Dante's life was passed. The most singular feature of the *Divine Comedy* is the way in which representatives of these political struggles, contemporaries of the poet or men of past history, enter into the successive scenes, and exchange experiences with the poet; on the very verge of the Beatific Vision Beatrice must needs break off to exalt a particular Roman Emperor and denounce a Pope. There is no such example in all literature of the intrusion of the particular into the sphere of the universal. Elsewhere in epic poetry, if personages of real life enter in, they are idealized, and take their tone and measure from their poetic surroundings. But the real personages of the *Divine Comedy* speak with their everyday speech, and are engrossed with the personalities of political faction or social intercourse. Many of these personages are so obscure that all the diligence of commentators cannot identify them; or in some cases, the evidence discovered by the commen-

tators is opposed to the judgments of Dante. We know that the poet in his personal life was a noble worker and martyr in an untoward age. But the literary tone that is proper to satire refuses to blend with epic idealism: the very sublimity of the poem as a whole makes these jarring notes the more discordant.

All these are particular elements of mediævalism which constitute special features of the *Divine Comedy:* but that which makes its unity and dominating impression is something still more characteristically mediæval. Classical poetry, as a convention, but as little more than a convention, must always invoke the Muse. There is occasional invocation of the Muse with Dante, but the true Muse of his poem is Beatrice. And she is much more than the Muse: she is the inspiration and soul of the whole. Nothing reveals the innermost heart of mediævalism more than the relations of Dante and Beatrice. They were not lovers, as a modern or an ancient poet would understand the term. Viewed at a distance in the radiancy of her girlhood, Beatrice had made upon Dante that impression which, in any age, girlhood may make upon the pure soul of a man. Seen only at social distance, this image of Beatrice had been kept within the limits of the ideal; when she is removed by an early death, her image passes into a higher region as symbol ot spiritual exaltation and the call from on high. Whatever Dante's life gathers of philosophy and practical wisdom must be idealized on a lower plane; beyond this there is a further exaltation, and Beatrice is its type. Now all this gives us the most impressive and singular char-

acteristic in the spirit of the Middle Ages — its tendency to idealization on the basis of sex homage. It is one of the ironies of history that from the "barbarian" races should have come this addition to human life and thought, that the attraction of sex to sex, which to the Greek was the fairest of life's sports, and to the Hebrew the foundation of domestic and social sanity, should now become an inspiration of mental and moral exaltation. The religion received by the western races passively from outside is touched by this instinct, and Christianity undergoes its greatest modification of Mariolatry, the mystery of Virgin Mother exalted amongst the highest religious mysteries. The same instinct affects an era which was almost entirely an era of war, and this gives the world Chivalry. This same instinct is touched by the philosophy of an age which found its philosophy in disputation, and, side by side with dry scholasticism, we get the light and airy "gay science," the Courts of Love, and amatory metaphysics that can turn scholastic subtlety on to sex questions, with no more of passion than in exchanges of riddles. This peculiar *ēthos* of mediævalism has no more striking manifestation than in the difference of the parts assigned to Beatrice and Virgil in Dante's poem. Virgil is guide through all the regions to the farthest bound of the mundane world, through regions constituted by a revelation Virgil had never known; for, once revealed, the regions of Hell and Purgatory are dominated by ideas that human science can interpret and systematize. But there is a region beyond all this, for eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered

into the heart of man, what has been reserved for the chosen of God. For the celestial there must come a guide from on high, and the poet finds one in the consummated perfection of his first love. The masterpiece of Dante and the masterpiece of Goethe unite in the same point. But there is a difference. The *Ewigweibliche* of the German poet comes only as a final thought in a disconnected epilogue. The glorified Beatrice has dominated every part of Dante's poem from beginning to end, as the same Beatrice in her maiden purity had struck the first note in the poet's New Life.

II

Of what is the *Paradise Lost* the exponent? Of Protestantism certainly, if Protestantism is to be the antithesis of Catholicism. But Protestantism is famous for its variations: there is nothing in Milton's poem to bring back to us the Protestantism of Luther, or of Calvin, or of Cromwell, or of the contests between Presbyterian and Independent. What the *Paradise Lost* reflects is the Protestantism of the Renaissance.

We have seen that this movement has two very different sides. On the one hand, the Renaissance means the recovery of the ancient classical literatures, with the resulting artistic and literary revival. But among the manuscripts brought to the West are manuscripts of the Old and New Testaments, and the same revived scholarship that was being applied to the secular literature was brought to bear also on these. When the results have time to reach the general mind, a

movement of a different kind begins, which we call the Reformation, and which is a political and theological, much more than a literary movement; it goes on to a stage of excess in the later Puritanism. The singular position of Milton in history is that he represents in himself the whole range of the Renaissance; he is the best type of the classical scholar, and he is the best type of Puritanism. In the morning of his life he is drinking in all Renaissance influences; he is personally associated with the Italian leaders of the movement, and those who speak with authority have ranked his Italian sonnets with the best sonnets of native production. In the middle stage of his life Milton is in the thick of Reformation polemics, and, next to Cromwell, the most hated Puritan in Europe. His old age relegates him from active life to literature; and the *Paradise Lost* displays the anomaly of Puritan thought in classic form. It is, however, no single system of Puritan thought, but the common groundwork of all in the literature of the Bible. The Bible of course belongs equally to Catholicism and to Protestantism. But there is a difference. To the Catholic, the Bible is the revered source of truth, while the interpretation of that truth, and the question what parts of it shall be emphasized, the Church keeps in its own hands. To the Protestant, the Bible is the sacred literature, to be distributed broadcast among the faithful as their daily spiritual food. But this Bible is a highly miscellaneous literature: the thoughts and ideas scattered through its separate books Milton focusses into a poetic scheme of cosmic history and the sum of things, and this

becomes accepted as the basis of Protestant thinking. A scheme of the universe had been conceived for mediæval Catholicism by Dante: this had been founded on philosophical reflection expressed in poetic symbolism. The Protestant scheme of the universe, through this work of Milton, finds its foundation in sacred literature.[1]

Now this has an important bearing upon literary history. A literary tradition, with each poet echoing his predecessor, had been the great achievement of classical antiquity: this the Middle Ages had interrupted, bringing to the front other things, including Christianity. With Milton the classical tradition revives, but meanwhile the literature of the Old and New Testament has been added to what is to be considered classical literature. The spirit of literary echoing, which is the essence of classicalism, is found to be applied by Milton to Greek and biblical literature alike.

I lay stress upon this matter of literary echoing, because it seems to me to be the very embodiment of the classical spirit in poetic art. But it is a difficult thing to discuss: he who undertakes to explain a joke

[1] That *Paradise Lost*, and not the Bible itself, is responsible for current ideas of cosmic history is illustrated by two circumstances. 1. The Protestant Bishop Bickersteth, in his poem *Yesterday, To-day and Forever*, has made an independent reconstruction of such cosmic history from purely biblical sources; this is found fundamentally different from Milton's, in such matters as the Fall of Angels and Man. 2. Dean Stanley (*History of Jewish Church*, lecture xlix) says there is no trace in Hebrew or Christian scriptures of Milton's Fall of the Angels. The passage in *Jude*, from which Milton probably drew the idea, has an entirely different reference.

finds that the humor has been evaporating while the explanation has been proceeding; and so the attempt to draw out the echoes that lie beneath the surface of poetry mars their delicacy by the mere process of statement. Our own time belongs to a different poetic era, when originality is enthroned and plagiarism is an indictable offence. In classical poetry originality, as we understand it, counts for little; while what might be called plagiarism — what was called plagiarism in eighteenth-century discussions over Milton's poetry[1] — is the fundamental beauty. The classical poets make a sort of apostolical succession in literature; each rests his claim to poetic unction on the way his details recall to the reader details in the poetry of his predecessors, while the poetry of these predecessors made echoes of poetry older still. Milton, coming at the end of the line, has the longest tradition behind him; he has moreover the addition of biblical to classic poetry to enlarge the field from which he can draw his effects.

What might have seemed a formidable obstacle in the poet's way — the incongruity of classical and biblical religion — is met by the traditional idea of idolatry as a corruption of true religion. The gods of antiquity become the devils of the Christian poem. When Satan has roused his followers from the stupor of their fall, and is marshalling them for fresh conflict, the

[1] An account of the Lauder controversy over the alleged plagiarisms of Milton is given at the end of Bishop Newton's edition of the *Paradise Lost*. I may add that this edition, with its copious footnotes citing parallels at full length, is specially helpful for the study of poetic echoing. [London: 1790.]

question is raised, Who are the leaders of this demonic host?

> Say, Muse, their names then known, who first, who last,
> Rous'd from the slumber on that fiery couch,
> At their great emperor's call, as next in worth,
> Came singly where he stood on the bare strand,
> While the promiscuous crowd stood yet aloof?

The very raising of the question echoes the classical convention of the appeal to the Muse; the answer echoes the poetical catalogues — of ships, of allies, of Argonautic comrades — which has been a fixed tradition of classical poetry. And the substance of the answer — some hundred and forty lines in length[1] — is a history of idolatry; each false god of biblical or Greek or Egyptian thought furnished with just such descriptive touches as will recall, in outline, the whole struggle of true and idolatrous in all literature. The powerful episode of Sin and Death at the gates of Hell is, as a whole, the expansion of St. James's thought: "The lust, when it hath conceived, beareth sin; and the sin, when it is fullgrown, bringeth forth death." But what in the epistle may be only metaphor becomes in the poem a fully developed allegory; one detail of the allegory — sin appearing full grown at the first thought of apostasy from God — is made elaborately to echo the classic legend of Athene springing fully armed from the brain of Zeus; while the climax of bringing forth death is at once supported and intensified by suggestions of the classical horrors of the mon-

[1] *Paradise Lost*, i. 381–521.

ster Scylla. The empire founded in hell by the fallen angels involves a council hall, and so a demonic architect; a classical parallel assists.

> In Ausonian land
> Men call'd him Mulciber; and how he fell
> From Heav'n, they fabl'd, thrown by angry Jove
> Sheer o'er the crystal battlements; from morn
> To noon he fell, from noon to dewy eve,
> A summer's day; and with the setting sun
> Dropt from the zenith like a falling star,
> On Lemnos th' Ægean isle: thus they relate,
> Erring; for he with this rebellious rout
> Fell long before.

Not personages only, but ideas of classical literature become the groundwork of poetic echoing. The angel who accepts the hospitality of Adam in Paradise is, of course, the sociable Raphael of the *Book of Tobit;* but, lest it might seem strange that an angel should partake of mortal food, we have recalled the speculation of ancient poetry on graduated scales of being, each feeding on that which is lower in the scale.

> Of elements
> The grosser feeds the purer, earth the sea,
> Earth and the sea feed air, the air those fires
> Ethereal, and as lowest first the moon. . . .
> The sun that light imparts to all, receives
> From all his alimental recompense
> In humid exhalations, and at even
> Sups with the ocean.

Large part of the spirit underlying classical literature is, of course, absolutely antagonistic to the spirit of the Bible; yet this has appropriateness for the fallen

angels. Satan and the powers of hell talk of fate instead of Providence, and of the Epicurean "gods who live at ease." The whole range of ancient philosophy, as a vanity to the Puritan thought of the one thing needful, is made a theme of discussion amongst the lost spirits.

> Others apart sat on a hill retired,
> In thoughts more elevate, and reasoned high
> Of Providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate,
> Fixed fate, free will, foreknowledge absolute,
> And found no end, in wandering mazes lost.
> Of good and evil much they argued then,
> Of happiness and final misery,
> Passion and apathy, and glory and shame;
> Vain wisdom all, and false philosophy.

The principle of such echoing applies to details of a picture, or to mere poetic machinery: the smallest point can gain by some memory link with the past of classical or biblical literature. Satan sees the world bound to the empyrean heaven by a golden chain, just as, in the *Iliad*, Zeus speaks of—

> our golden everlasting chain,
> Whose strong embrace holds heaven and earth and main:
> I fix the chain to strong Olympus' height,
> And the whole world hangs trembling in my sight.

Flowers spring up for Adam and Eve passing to their nuptial bower, as in the *Iliad* for Zeus and Hera; as with Olympus, so the gate of heaven is self-opening to those who pass through. The stairway ascending to the gate of heaven recalls Jacob's vision of the ladder and the ascending and descending angels. Beside this

is a passage down to the earth, wider, it is said, than that of aftertime, by which the whole length and breadth of the promised land was open to the sight of all heaven: this last is an echo of the saying in *Deuteronomy*, "A land which the LORD thy God careth for; the eyes of the LORD thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year." The Morning Hymn in Paradise is closely modelled upon the *Benedicite*. Satan leads his rebel forces "into the limits of the north," and to what he impiously names after the Messiah's Mount of the Congregation: so in biblical prophecy it is always the north [1] out of which danger threatens God's people, and in particular, Isaiah's hymn of the fallen Star of Morning makes him say in his heart:—

> I will ascend into heaven,
> I will exalt my throne above the stars of God;
> And I will sit upon the mount of congregation
> In the uttermost parts of the north.

The poetic practice of Milton avoids terms of numerical exactness as carefully as that of Dante affects them; but there is an exception where the exact term is an echo. Thus it is said of Satan:—

> His countenance, as the morning star that guides
> The starry flock, allured them, and with lies
> Drew after him the *third part* of Heaven's host:

this is on the authority of a passage in *Revelation*, which speaks of the Dragon "whose tail draweth the *third*

[1] E.g. *Job* xxxvii. 22; the note on this passage in the Modern Reader's Bible (page 1672) collects other examples.

part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth." Similarly, the angelic narrator tells of the Messiah advancing to his triumph, attended with ten thousand thousand saints —

> And twenty thousand (I their number heard)
> Chariots of God, half on each hand were seen:

the unwonted definiteness is an echo from the triumph ode of the sixty-eighth Psalm: —

> The chariots of God are twenty thousand,
> Even thousands upon thousands.

It is a fine example of the poetic echo where the rebel angels threaten to use the very elements of their hell as arms against their conqueror, until the Almighty shall find his throne "mixed with Tartarean sulphur and strange fire": the epithet *strange* (besides its etymological suggestion of *étrange* or *foreign*) draws in the stories of Nadab and Abihu, who offered strange fire before the LORD and were destroyed. The war in heaven, with its hurling of mountains, is as a whole founded on the classical war of Titans against their heaven. But when the evil angels, driven in flight before the advancing Messiah, are said to —

> wish the mountains now might be again
> Thrown on them as a shelter from his ire —

the force of the *again* is to draw in the passage in *Hosea*, and its echo in *Revelation*, in which the foes of God call upon the mountains and hills to cover them. The most incongruous detail in the whole picture thus rests upon both classical and biblical foundation. Once

more: the Messiah brings the victory in this war of heaven by his own unaided might: —

> Stand still in bright array, ye saints, here stand
> Ye angels armed; this day from battle rest;

we at once catch the echo from the scene of Moses ushering in the supernatural deliverance at the Red Sea: —

> Stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD.

More than this, we catch the echo of the forty-sixth Psalm, when, picturing Jehovah as the desolator making wars to cease to the ends of the earth, it reaches its climax: —

> Be still, and know that I am God!

The echoing is more difficult to formulate, though equally striking, when it rests upon single words, or even sentence structure. The long narrative of the War in Heaven and Creation of the World, which fills the middle of Milton's poem, is itself a tribute to the convention of classical epic, by which the beginning of affairs is given by narrative in the course of the action. The words with which this narrative opens —

> High matter thou enjoinst me, O prime of men,
> Sad task and hard —

seem almost a formula for the commencement of such an epic narrative; they echo exactly the words with which Æneas opens his narrative at the corresponding point of Virgil's epic —

> Infandum, Regina, jubes renovare dolorem —

and in spirit there is an echo of the opening of Odysseus' story at the Phæacian banquet, not to mention similar situations in other classical poems.[1] If the reader cares to analyze the sentence structure of Milton's elaborate similes, he will find that they fall into three main types, and thus echo one another, not without suggestions of similar structure in Homer.[2] Of course, echoes of this kind are often *phonānta sunetoisin*, things which have a sound for those who have ears. It seems a simple line —

Thou sun, of this great world both eye and soul —

[1] *Odyssey*, ix. init. Compare *Faerie Queene*, II. ii. 39–40.

[2] In similes of the first type the substance of the comparison is expressed in dependent sentences or clauses, and then additional particulars are added in a principal sentence. [Simile of the leviathan i. 200–208 — of the bees i. 768–775 — of the fleet on the horizon ii. 636–642 — of the gales of Araby iv. 159–165.] The effect is increased in some by the addition of a summary, binding both parts together. [Simile of the elves i. 781–788 — of the cloud forms ii. 533–538.] The simile of the bending corn [iv. 980–985] has the summary without the other cha acteristics.

In similes of the second type a general state of things is indicated in a series of dependent sentences, then a modifying circumstance follows in a short dependent sentence introduced by a new connective, then the result of the one on the other follows in a principal sentence. [Simile of the reviving landscape ii. 488–495 — of the rustic maiden ix. 445–454.]

In similes of the third type the particulars are introduced in successive dependent sentences or clauses of increasing indirectness. [Simile of reverberating rocks ii. 284–290 — of the night hag ii. 662–666 — of thunder clouds ii. 714–718 — of a vulture on a barren plain iii. 431–439 — of the scout iii. 543–551.]

In all three types the classical scholar will recognize a general resemblance to the structure of Homeric similes, but from the different sentence construction of English and Greek it is difficult to equate the types precisely.

but the *both* is a reminder to the classical scholar how the system of Ovid makes the sun the eye of the world, that of Pliny makes the sun its soul. Or again: the narrative of the Rebellion in Heaven opens with the words —

On a Day —

if we stop here, there is an echo of the scene in *Job* opening with the words, "There was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD"; and the interesting suggestion of ceremonial days in the eternity of heaven which those words open up is reflected in the narration of Raphael which follows. But when Milton's sentence continues —

on such day
As Heaven's great year brings forth —

the reader of Plato recognizes the *magnus annus*, the vast stretch of time conceived to make a year for heaven, the interval when the differing periods of the revolving spheres have reached their common multiple, and so all are alike at their starting-point at the same moment. Sometimes it is a minute point in the original which is expanded in the echo. By a metaphor, the *Epistle to Hebrews* speaks of the Son as the *express* image of the Father: the metaphor is raised by Milton to a distinct action: —

He full
Resplendent all his Father manifest
Expressed.[1]

[1] "Express image of his person" is the A. V. reading of *Hebrews* i. 3; compare *Paradise Lost*, x. 66.

The opening words of *Genesis* say that the earth was without form and void, and the Spirit of God *moved* upon the face of the waters. The word in the original carries the metaphorical suggestion of *brooding:* Milton not only substitutes that word, but expands the idea, so that the mystic process of bringing cosmos out of chaos is assimilated to the coagulating and differentiating first steps in the hatching of an egg.

On the watry calm
His brooding wings the Spirit of God outspread,
And vital virtue infused, and vital warmth
Throughout the fluid mass, but downward purged
The black tartareous cold infernal dregs,
Adverse to life: then founded — then conglobed
Like things to like, the rest to several place
Disparted, and between spun out the air —
And earth self-balanc't on her centre hung.[1]

It may be worth while to stop and realize from time to time the chain of echoes — the mixed metaphor seems not inapt for its purpose — which have gathered about a particular passage. Virgil, as his hero steps over the boundary which separates from the world of spirits, surrounds him with shadowy figures, personifications of the ideas we associate with death, and what precedes or follows death.

[1] This much disputed passage (vii. 234–242) I have punctuated so as to make the words between the dashes exegetical of the word *founded*. This biblical term of the work of creation (e.g. *Psalm* xxiv. 2) Milton interprets as uniting like things to like and separating unlike things from unlike: the mass has thus run together into globules of earth, globules of water, with air separating.

Before the gate, yea in the yawning porch,
Grief, and avenging Cares, have placed their lair;
And pale Diseases dwell, and sad Old Age,
Fear, Famine preaching crime, and sordid Want,
Shapes terrible to look on: Death, and Toil,
And Death's own brother Sleep, and the false Joys
That cheat men's minds: War on the other side,
Death-laden, and, deep in their iron-bound cells,
The Furies of Remorse, while Discord raves,
Her hair of living snakes clotted with blood.

Sackville's Induction to the *Mirror for Magistrates* has a descent to the world of spirits, in which Virgil's effect is recalled, but with a difference: each single personification is expanded to a full-length portrait, with many stanzas of description; a gallery of shadow sculpture and masterpiece of sustained horror. We have space for only one or two of these shadow figures.

And first within the jaws and porch of hell
Sat deep Remorse of Conscience, all besprent
With tears: and to herself oft would she tell
Her wretchedness, and cursing never stent
To sob and sigh: but ever thus lament
With thoughtful care, as she that all in vain
Would wear and waste continually in pain.

Her eyes unsteadfast rolling here and there,
Whirled on each place, as place that vengeance brought;
So was her mind continually in fear,
Tossed and tormented with the tedious thought
Of those detested crimes which she had wrought:
With dreadful cheer and looks thrown to the sky,
Wishing for death, and yet she could not die.

Next saw we Dread, all trembling how he shook,
With foot uncertain proffered here and there;

Benumbed of speech, and with a ghastly look
Searched every place, all pale and dread for fear,
His cap upborne with starting of his hair,
Stoyned and amazed at his own shade for deed,
And fearing greater dangers than was need. . . .

And next in order sad Old Age we found:
His beard all hoar, his eyes hollow and blind;
With drooping cheer still poring on the ground,
As on the place where nature him assigned
To rest, when that the sisters had untwined
His vital thread, and ended with their knife
The fleeting course of fast declining life. . . .

Crookback'd he was, tooth shaken, and blear eyed;
Went on three feet, and sometime crept on four;
With old lame bones, that rattled by his side;
His scalp all pill'd, and he with eld forlore:
His withered fist still knocking at death's door;
Tumbling and drivelling as he draws his breath:
For brief, the shape and messenger of death.

Spenser followed Sackville as his master: where a hero of the *Fairie Queene* is led by Mammon down the broad way to Pluto's grisly realm the traditional effect is introduced, with the brevity of Virgil, yet something of the vividness of Sackville.

By that way's side there sat internal Pain,
And fast beside him sat tumultuous Strife:
The one in hand an iron whip did strain,
The other brandished a bloody knife;
And both did gnash their teeth, and both did threaten life.

On th' other side in one consort there sat
Cruel Revenge, and rancorous Despight,
Disloyal Treason and heart-burning Hate;
But gnawing Jealousy, out of their sight

Sitting alone, his bitter lips did bite;
And trembling Fear still to and fro did fly,
And found no place where safe he shroud him might:
Lamenting Sorrow did in darkness lie,
And Shame his ugly face did hide from living eye.

And over them sad Horror with grim hew
Did always soar, beating his iron wings;
And after him Owls and Night-ravens flew
The hateful messengers of heavy things,
Of death and dolor telling sad tidings;
Whiles sad Celeno, sitting on a clifte,
A song of bale and bitter sorrow sings,
That heart of flint asunder could have rift;
Which having ended after him she flieth swift.

Milton in his turn recalls this traditionary train of shadow personifications, but the whole situation is different. Satan encounters the court of Chaos, its dark pavilion spread on the wasteful deep: —

With him enthroned
Sat sable-vested Night, eldest of things,
The consort of his reign; and by them stood
Orcus and Ades, and the dreaded name
Of Demogorgon; Rumor next, and Chance,
And Tumult and Confusion all embroiled,
And Discord with a thousand various mouths.

We may take a brief passage of Milton, and see how widely its rootlets of poetic association are spread. Between Satan and the Night Watch of Angels in Paradise a conflict is impending (at the close of the fourth book) that might have shattered the world —

Had not soon
Th' Eternal to prevent such horrid fray
Hung forth in Heaven his golden scales, yet seen

Betwixt Astræa and the scorpion sign,
Wherein all things created first he weighed,
The pendulous round earth with balanced air
In counterpoise, now ponders all events,
Battles and realms: in these he put two weights,
The sequel each of parting and of fight;
The latter quick up flew, and kick't the beam. . . .
        The Fiend lookt up and knew
His mounted scale aloft: nor more; but fled
Murmuring, and with him fled the shades of night.

Sir John Seeley tells us he could never read this "myth" without shuddering. The shudder was due to his mistaking for a myth what is really a fine stroke of imaginative picturing, intensified by echoes extending to every quarter of thought. The night in Paradise, with Angels watching over sleeping innocence, brings the most mighty forces into hostile meeting, yet the incidents are all carefully kept silent and shadowy, as if they might be parts of some nightmare dream. It is in the spirit of such nightmare dream that the movement advances nearer and nearer to some unspeakable shock, yet, ere the shock is reached, a mystic sign in heaven is interposed, and the final lines, like a moment of waking, give us, as it were, the nightmare horror vanishing with low murmur, and showing day at hand. But this sudden sign in heaven, so harmonious with the atmosphere of the whole incident, is found to be an exact echo of a favorite Homeric detail—Zeus's balance hung out in heaven, which makes fate: twice in the *Iliad* this is used to determine crises of destiny, and the exact formula is echoed by Virgil for a crisis of his story. But the idea of the balance in heaven has

many indirect, perhaps for that reason still more beautiful, echoes. It suggests a sign of the Zodiac: for the constellations of heaven are faded myths, and the Scales is a faint memento of Justice, or the Virgin Astræa, retreating from earth to heaven, with her symbol of equity hung out in heaven by her side. Again, the association of Deity with the balance has spread its roots widely through biblical literature. We recall from the Isaiahan Rhapsody how He "hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance." The image is carried in *Job* to the first moment of creation: "He looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven, to make a weight for the wind, yea, he meteth out the waters by measure." The word "ponder" comes to remind us, by its etymology, how the conception of the balance has rooted itself in our very language. Other associations follow: how "the LORD weigheth the spirits," "by Him actions are weighed." The final word "realms" flashes upon us the impressive Belshazzar story of the *Book of Daniel*, where again a visible sign from heaven pronounces a whole kingdom "weighed in the balances and found wanting."

I am tempted to add one more illustration, if for no other reason, to remind the reader that the classical tradition does not end with Milton; the poetry of *Paradise Lost* becomes itself a subject of echoing to such a poet as Bishop Bickersteth, who, in Milton's

spirit, but two centuries in advance of Milton in scholarship, seeks a reconstruction of biblical literary details in a consistent scheme. The second psalm is an impressive lyric picture of the nations of the earth raging, their kings and rulers taking counsel together, to throw off the bonds of Jehovah's Anointed.

> He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh:
> The Lord shall have them in derision.
> Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath,
> And vex them in his sore displeasure.

The passage is so far echoed in Milton as to find a foundation for the use of laughter in application to God: —

> Thou thy foes
> Justly hast in derision, and secure
> Laugh'st at their vain designs and tumults vain.

By Bickersteth the imagery of the psalm is expanded to an elaborate picture, and made the climax to the conspiracy formed by the Empire of Darkness; successive lines suggest echoes of the end of Herod, the plague of Egyptian darkness, the prophet Elijah on Mount Carmel, and passage after passage of the *Book of Revelation*, while the opening simile is a variation from Milton.[1]

> He spake, and murmurs of assent not loud
> But deep, — as is the ocean's sudden roar,
> When a careering blast with tempest charged
> Down rushing through the mountain gorges strikes

[1] *Yesterday To-day and Forever*, book vi, lines 387–427. For the opening simile, compare *Paradise Lost*, ii. 284.

The waters of a rocky bay, whose cliffs
And caves re-echo when the storm is past, —
Spread in interminable waves of sound
Along those countless ranks. Gladly they crouch'd,
As weaker spirits will crouch, beneath the shade
Of wickedness more wicked than their own,
And called upon their prince as God: when, lo,
A cloud impenetrable to all light,
At first not larger than the mystic hand
The prophet's servant saw from Carmel's rocks,
Hung pois'd above the throne of Lucifer,
And, spreading with the speed of thought, o'erhung
The apostate armies, shroud of dreadful gloom,
Darkness that might be felt. . . .
And for one dreadful hour, one of heaven's hours,
None from his seat arose, or station stirr'd,
Or moved his lip, or trembled. Terror froze
Their hearts insensible, until a sound,
More terrible than thunder, vibrated
Through every spirit, Jehovah's awful laugh,
Mocking their fears and scorning their designs,
The laughter of Eternal Love incensed.

Not the bare meaning then of such poetry as Milton's, but this supplemented by the reflection which the wording calls up from the poetry of the past, is what makes the classical element in literary art. Perhaps this has never been more strongly stated than by the late Professor Conington in his introduction to the *Bucolics* of Virgil; Virgil is hardly second to Milton in the way he reflects the classical impulse. The commentator speaks in general terms of the Augustan age attributing poetic originality to such poets as Horace and Propertius, and to the Roman dramatists, "specifically for

having applied their wit to the writings of the Greeks as to so much raw material." He proceeds: —

It is one thing to accept broadly the statement that Virgil is a copyist, and quite another to follow him line by line and observe how constantly he is thinking of his guide, looking to him where a simple reliance on nature would have been not only far better but far more easy and obvious, and on many occasions deviating from the passage immediately before him only to cast a glance on some other part of his model. Tityrus, Galatea, Amaryllis, Corydon, Thestylis, Menalcas, Damœtas, Amyntas, Ægon, Daphnis, Thyrsis, Micon, Lycidas are all names to be found in the muster-roll of Theocritus . . . Corydon addresses Alexis in the language used by Polyphemus to Galatea; boasts in the same way of his thousand sheep, and his never-failing supply of milk; answers objections to his personal appearance in the same way by an appeal to the ocean mirror; paints in similar colours the pleasures of a rural life; glances similarly at the pets he is rearing for his love: and finally taxes himself for his folly, and reminds himself that there are other loves to be found in the world, in language which is as nearly as may be a translation from the eleventh Idyl. . . . Even this enumeration must fail to give any notion of the numberless instances of incidental imitation, sometimes in a single line, sometimes in the mere turn of an expression, which fill up as it were the broader outlines of the copy. And yet there can be no doubt that Virgil ranked as an original poet in his own judgment no less than in that of his contemporaries, and that on the strength of those very appropriations which would stamp a modern author with the charge of plagiarism.

Speaking of Virgil's relation to Greek writers in general, he proceeds: —

He had doubtless lived from boyhood in their world; and their world accordingly became a sort of second nature to him — a storehouse of life and truth and beauty, the standard to which he brought conceptions and images as they rose up within him. . . .

He instances Virgil's practice of using a local epithet where there is no special reason for it, and continues: —

What appropriateness can there be in describing the hedge which separates Tityrus' farm from his neighbour's as having its willow-blossoms fed upon by bees of Hybla, or in the wish that the swarms which Mæris has to look after may avoid the yews of Corsica? The epithet here is significant not to the reader but to the poet, or to the reader only so far as he happens to share in the poet's intellectual antecedents; it appeals not to a first-hand appreciation of the characteristics of natural objects, such as is open to all, but to information gained from reading or travel and therefore confined to a few. . . . There are some minds which are better calculated, at least in youth, to be impressed by the inexhaustibleness of Art than by the infinity of Nature. . . . Over such minds the recollection of a word in a book has the same power which others find in a remembered sight or sound. It recalls not only its own image, but the images which were seen in company with it; nay, it may touch yet longer trains of association and come back upon the memory with something like the force of the entire body of impressions originally excited by the work which happens to contain it. Even those who have held more direct intercourse with nature are not insensible to the operation of this secondary charm. Can any one who reads Milton doubt that the mere sound of the stately names of classic history and mythology exercised a real influence on the poet's fancy?

These extracts from Conington bring out forcibly two characteristics of the classical tradition: how each poet constitutes so much raw material upon which future poets may work; how again the whole body of past literature becomes to poets and readers a second nature, and fidelity to this literary inheritance has much of the effect that we call truth to nature in the other sense of the word. There is yet another consideration. The question is not of history, nor the dramatization of ex-

perience, but for the most part of purely creative poetry, that appeals solely to the imagination. Now whatever of familiarity can be given to the details is so much assistance to the effort of imagination. We may say that what evidence is in the world of fact, associations with previous poetry are in the world of creative imagination. This point has a special bearing upon one element of the *Paradise Lost.* Dante, we have seen, constructs his universe on the basis of the Ptolemaic astronomy: in his day there was no other. It is different with Milton: he lives in the days of the new science; he is a universal scholar, and has been in personal contact with Galileo himself. Never was a creative poet placed in a greater dilemma. If he follows Dante and the Ptolemaic system, he is false to what he knows as scientific truth; if, on the other hand, he embodies in his poem the Copernican structure of the world, he cuts his creative picture adrift from all poetic associations, and leaves it hanging unsupported in the world of imagination. Milton solves the difficulty and makes it the source of additional poetic effects. In the *Divine Comedy* the traveller through the universe is the poet himself, and all description of things comes with the poet's authority. No description of the universe comes directly from Milton. Most of what we get comes indirectly, as we follow the journey of Satan through the world; and this is in full harmony with the arrangement of the old astronomy. For the Ptolemaic system is the systematization of appearances: all that our senses tell of the outside world is explained on this basis. It is when reflection is added to sense impression that need arises for the new astron-

omy, which accounts both for the visible appearances and the difficulties suggested by reflection. This new astronomy is not ignored in Milton's poem, but comes as a suggestion of angelic intelligence. In the eighth book Adam puts to his angel guest a difficulty that has troubled him in his observation of the heavens.

When I behold this goodly frame, this World
Of Heav'n and Earth consisting, and compute
Their magnitudes, this Earth, a spot, a grain,
An atom, with the firmament compared,
And all her numbered stars, that seem to roll
Spaces incomprehensible (for such
Their distance argues, and their swift return
Diurnal) merely to officiate light
Round this opacous Earth, this punctual spot,
One day and night; in all their vast survey
Useless besides; reasoning I oft admire,
How Nature wise and frugal could commit
Such disproportions.

Raphael points out at length how this criticism upon Nature rests solely on the appearance of things, and at last opens out the other possibility.

What if the sun
Be centre to the world, and other stars
By his attractive virtue and their own
Incited, dance about him various rounds?
Their wandering course, now high, now low, then hid,
Progressive, retrograde, or standing still,
In six thou seest, and what if seventh to these
The planet Earth, so steadfast though she seem,
Insensibly three different motions move?

Few passages of the poem are more beautifully worded than that in which angelic intelligence unfolds the new

reading of the visible heavens to one who hears the strange suggestion for the first time.

> But whether thus these things, or whether not,
> Whether the Sun predominant in heaven
> Rise on the Earth, or Earth rise on the Sun;
> He from the east his flaming road begin,
> Or she from west her silent course advance
> With inoffensive pace that spinning sleeps
> On her soft axle, while she paces even,
> And bears thee soft with the smooth air along,
> Solicit not thy thoughts with matters hid.

It has not been a single feature of style that we have been discussing at all this length. Sensitiveness to literary reminiscences is the connective bond of the whole classical tradition in literature; Milton at once carries this to its furthest point, and extends it over the sacred literature of the Bible. And this is an element of poetic art which we are in danger of losing. There are those at the present time who, to meet difficulties of educational pressure, give the advice to let the classics go, and concentrate upon our own English literature. They fail to see that with the loss of the classics we lose also the most intensely poetic element in large part of English poetry. For the poetic echo is not a thing that can be dealt with by footnotes and explanations. It is a matter of experience — which, I fear, the preceding pages have illustrated — that the clumsiness of having to point out literary reminiscences blurs their charm. They are like overtones in music. We know that every sound heard by the ear as a note of distinct pitch is accompanied with various sets of harmonics; none of

these harmonics are audible in themselves, yet they determine altogether the timbre of the note, making all the difference between the sound heard in sonorous brass, or vibrating wire, or clear flute, or liquid violin. The advice to let the classics go is like a suggestion in music to save the great expense of an orchestra, and let us have our symphonic compositions played from piano score. The compromise will not serve. It is only when the romantic momentum towards freedom and novelty is balanced by the classical gravitation to the poetic past that we have the fulness and sanity of literary art.

This is no place for the full characterization of poets like Dante and Milton, or their great masterpieces. The purpose of the chapter has been to emphasize the antithesis of the two poems as constituting in their combination an integral part of our world literature. In the *Divine Comedy* we have the richest treasure of poetic symbolism; to read it, moreover, is to follow the best thinking of the Middle Ages and the era of pure Catholicism. The *Paradise Lost* is the gift to world literature of Protestantism in its fulness, not disintegrated into its warring sections. When the empire was Christianized, as remarked before, Rome was grafted upon the biblical tree; Hellenic and Hebraic entered upon their slow coöperation. When the Renaissance attained its full consummation, the *Paradise Lost* presented the Bible as entering into classical literature; Hellenic and Hebraic are seen in their richest combination.

CHAPTER V

THE FIVE LITERARY BIBLES

Versions of the Faust Story

THE Story of Faust has plausible claims to be ranked as the greatest of stories: witness the appeal it has made to the greatest poetic minds. Marlowe, only peer of Shakespeare in his own age; Calderon, supreme dramatist of Catholic Spain; Goethe, the centre and rallying-point for the gospel of culture which inspired the close of the eighteenth and opening of the nineteenth centuries; Philip Bailey, prophet of modern mysticism, as to whom there is a tradition that Tennyson declined to characterize his poem lest he should seem to be using language of adulation — all these have given us versions of Faust; while two of them, Goethe and Bailey, have kept the Faust Story by them as life companions, reading into this one creation what inspiration they received from successive phases of their own personal lives, from fresh youth to mature old age. There has been a similar appeal to the great masters of music. Of the Germans, Spohr and Schumann; of the French, Gounod and Berlioz; of the Italians, Boito — all have translated the Faust Story into music: if little has been heard of the Spohr version, yet the rest have

been accepted as masterpieces of musical drama. What is there in this Faust Story that has proved such a fascination for so many great masters?

Reduced to its lowest terms, the Story of Faust is an attempt to realize in concrete life one of the simplest verses of Scripture: What shall it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and lose his soul? Familiarity has dulled the edge of this biblical aphorism; if we press its language, the short verse is seen to involve three ideas of colossal import, alike to the thinker and to the poetic interpreter of life. First: What is it to gain the whole world? The gain of a fortune or a kingdom is enough for most stories; the gaining of the whole world tasks the imagination to its depths to find for it any visible form in which it can be intelligibly embodied. Again, it is a sufficiently serious question, What is it to lose the soul? But a third stumbling-block to the imagination lurks in the word "profit": the conception of barter, gain and loss, the machinery of the market, in association with such ideas as the world and the soul. Yet whoever would narrate or present the Story of Faust must find some means of realizing these three ideas: they are the three inevitable heads of the poetic sermon. Thus, to follow the Story of Faust through its different versions is not merely a curiosity of comparative literature. It means our watching the most widely sundered eras or schools of thought — the first crude stage of the English Reformation, Spanish chivalry and devoutness, the many-sided culture of modern Germany, mysticism in all its brooding subtlety — watching how these, each in its turn, will grapple with the three fundamental

elements of the story; what philosophic content each will put into the three ideas, what poetic and dramatic machinery will be drawn upon to give the ideas visible embodiment. If, as has been suggested in this work, the three notes of a literary bible are width of range, supreme literary excellence, and a measure of literary unity, then there can be no better example of a literary bible than the versions of the Faust Story.

I

The legend has come down to us from the floating literature of the Middle Ages, a period when it was natural to men to do their thinking in story form.[1] And to that age the three heads of the sermon presented not the slightest difficulty: they were commonplaces of mediæval thought. Mediæval magic could picture the gaining of the whole world. The mediæval conception of hell sufficiently expressed the loss of the soul. And as to a spiritual market, it was the commonest thing in those times to hear of men selling their souls to the Devil. It is when these mediæval conceptions pass into periods which emphasize the idea of rationalization that the literary interest of the Faust Story begins. One however of these three elements of mediævalism is found to cling to all versions of the story; this is magic. Magic was the most familiar of all things to the mind of the Middle Ages. Christianity had not destroyed, but

[1] An account of the Puppet Play of Faust, and of other early versions, will be found in T. C. H. Hedderwick's *Doctor Faust* (Kegan Paul); also in an Appendix to Bayard Taylor's translation of Goethe's *Faust*.

simply vanquished heathendom, and the old nature gods emerged as demons with lessened yet mighty powers; magic was a sort of anti-religion, witchcraft worshipping the Devil and his demons in a parody of the rites with which the miracle-working Church worshipped God. Or again, magic was the shadow cast upon the mediæval imagination by the coming science: wand, trine, pentagram, were imaginative distortions of the apparatus and diagrams of science; magical charms and spells were adumbrations of scientific law. To the modern world magic is unthinkable. Yet the Faust Story must retain it, because of the sheer impossibility of finding any other imaginative form in which to embody one of its necessary ideas. To stop short of the *whole world* as the price of Faust's soul would be to lose the individuality of the story altogether. Yet how is this to be portrayed? Science has concentrated our attention upon second causes, upon the linking of means with ends: the mind refuses to take in a reticulated totality of means that would compass a totality of ends. But magic ignores all means; it is the elimination of all that comes between the will and its instant realization; whoever has gained magic has the whole world at his disposal. Magic then becomes a necessary postulate for all versions of the Faust Story. And in the latest versions a fresh source of interest is found in the special treatment designed to mask or neutralize the incongruous element of magic in an otherwise rationalized story.

II

The Renaissance, to which Marlowe's Version belongs, is an isthmus separating two vast tracts of time: the Middle Ages, of robust imagination, and our Modern Times, that would reduce all things to rational form. It is natural that the spirit of both these ages should to some extent be reflected in the poem of the transition period. The mediæval traditions are retained by Marlowe in their fulness; yet in the detailed treatment of them there are signs of incipient rationalization. Thus, the magic of this play is the crudest mediæval magic; yet a new interest appears in the use made of the magic by Faustus, in the way that his application of it is inspired by nothing more than the spirit of curiosity. It has been made an objection to Marlowe's play that its hero, so different from the heroes of the other versions, is a man without character. But this alleged absence of character is in reality that which makes Faustus a perfect expression of the era which produced the poem. For besides the Renaissance of the thinkers and the artists there was a Popular Renaissance. The ideas that were transforming history percolated down at last to the mind of the masses, even to that social stratum to which the early Elizabethan drama appealed. When the discovery of the new world had doubled the size of the habitable globe, and the new astronomy changed this earth from the bottom of all things to a twirling ball in mid space, when traditions were everywhere breaking down and men were practising to walk by reason, it was inevitable that a strong impression of change and

novelty should pervade the general mind; later on, principles would be grasped and great popular movements would arise, but at first the Popular Renaissance manifests itself as a spirit of curiosity and irresponsible freshness. Now, what makes the whole personality of Doctor Faustus is just this spirit of curiosity, this irresponsible appetite of body and mind.

Shall I make spirits fetch me what I please,
Resolve me of all ambiguities,
Perform what desperate enterprise I will?
I'll have them fly to India for gold,
Ransack the ocean for orient pearl,
And search all corners of this new-found world
For pleasant fruits and princely delicates;
I'll have them read me strange philosophy,
And tell the secrets of all foreign kings;
I'll have them wall all Germany with brass,
And make swift Rhine circle fair Wertenberg;
I'll have them fill the public schools with silk,
Wherewith the students shall be bravely clad;
I'll levy soldiers with the coin they bring,
And chase the Prince of Parma from our land,
And reign sole king of all the provinces;
Yea, stranger engines for the brunt of war,
Than was the fiery keel at Antwerp's bridge,
I'll make my servile spirits to invent.

Possessed of omnipotent magic, Faustus does not use his power for profound speculations, or schemes of self-aggrandizement; he flits like a bee from flower to flower of casual suggestion; he is ready to go to hell for the sake of a new sensation. To just this extent, but no farther, is there a rationalization of the traditional magic. And incipient rationalization appears simi-

larly in regard to another of the necessary elements o the Faust Story. The machinery of temptation in Mar lowe's version gives us the stock mediæval tempter ready to bid for the soul of Faustus. But Mephis tophilis appears as something more than this. Totally unlike the cynical creation of Goethe, Marlowe's Meph istophilis at times shows touches of a highly spiritua being. He seems to embody St. James's saying, Th devils believe and tremble. Where Faustus can main tain a jaunty scepticism, the fiend shudders at the sacre mysteries, flies from the topic of God and salvation, an —in violation of his whole purpose — lets slip warning of the terrible awakening in store for his victim in th end. Spiritual conceptions are found to play eve about the topic of hell itself : —

> Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscrib'd
> In one self place ; for where we are is hell,
> And where hell is, there must we ever be :
> And, to conclude, when all the world dissolves,
> And every creature shall be purified,
> All places shall be hell that are not heaven.

But it is in reference to the third of the three motive which make up the story of Faust that the rationalizin tendency of the present version comes out most clearly What is it to lose the soul ? The mediæval answer t this question is reserved by Marlowe to the end of th story : punctually at the close of the twenty-four year visible fiends carry off Faustus, body and soul, to a ma terial hell. But all through the course of the actio Faustus is, in a very different way, losing his soul Marlowe has given us here a highly original dramatiza

tion of a very commonplace spiritual process. As a matter of course, by repeated yieldings to sin the will gradually loses its resisting power. To give dramatic accentuation to this, the poet uses the same device which Shakespeare uses with such art to indicate the on-coming madness of Lear; waves of hysteric passion sweep at intervals over the hero, becoming stronger and stronger, until, in the one case, Lear is stark mad; in the other case, Faustus sinks helpless to his doom.[1] This Faustus, whose whole personality is the embodiment of the spirit of curiosity, is necessarily a man of very mobile emotions; and he has doomed himself to perdition at the close of a specified period. Inevitably, during the twenty-four years, accidents from time to time give suggestions of repentance, suggestions to be quickly rejected; Faustus is thus continually passing from the height of hope to the depth of despair. Such sudden transitions in so emotional a temperament will naturally be accompanied with hysterical shocks; more and more, as the action proceeds, spasms of physical suffering mark the mental crises. A chance word of Mephistophilis, that the world was made for man, rouses Faustus to a sudden resolve; the Good and Evil Angels contend over him, until the Evil Angel mutters, "Faustus never will repent": this brings the first of the hysteric shocks, and in an altered tone the sinner realizes that his heart is hardened beyond the power of repentance. Again, the refusal of the demon to answer the question, Who made the world? brings a second burst of excitement: Mephistophilis holds up

[1] Compare my *Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist*, pages 209–215.

the bond, and with an hysteric change of tone Faustu realizes that he is lost. An old man, met by chance makes a touchingly simple appeal to the hardening sin ner; the opening words of Faust's answer just fit th awakening from a half-dazing shock: —

> Where art thou, Faustus? wretch, what hast thou done?
> Damn'd art thou, Faustus, damn'd; despair and die!

In the closing scenes the language is still more pro nounced: Faustus would weep, but the Devil draws i his tears; he would lift up his hands, but Lucifer an Mephistophilis hold them down.

> O, I'll leap up to my God! — Who pulls me down? —
> . . . Ah! my Christ! —
> Ah, rend not my heart for naming of my Christ!
> Yet will I call on him! — O, spare me, Lucifer!

It is of course clear from the dramatic action of th scenes that nothing of what these words imply is hap pening: not the slightest force is used upon Faustu until the twenty-four years are fully expired. It is th spasms of physical agony in which the hysterical shock have culminated that Faustus is mistaking for the fin gers of fiends upon his heartstrings. Faustus has bee all the while arming his own body to inhibit the motion of his soul towards repentance; he has committe spiritual suicide before the moment when the devi may claim him as their own.

The final scene is a dramatic masterpiece. The la hour on earth of a lost soul, instead of being a hubbub agony cries, is made artistically impressive by the san poetic device which is used to introduce the climax

the *Book of Job.*[1] A moving background of nature enthralls the attention; each successive thought is suggested to Faustus from outside. The clock strikes eleven: unable to endure the thought of the single hour left him, Faustus — who has always had a gleam of hope at the sight of the heavens — flings open the casement. He gazes upon a magnificent scene of starlight: each heavenly body hangs in space like a golden ball; only upon the horizon rests a dull, heavy bank of cloud. It is not the beauty of the scene that holds Faustus's thoughts: he seems to see visibly before him the irresistible movement of time, and knows how vain is his appeal to delay it.

> The stars move still, time runs, the clock will strike,
> The devil will come and Faustus must be damn'd.
> O, I'll leap up to my God! — Who pulls me down? —

It is of course one of his hysteric spasms that has seized him; when he recovers, he turns again to the comforting sky. But at that moment the Aurora Borealis — known in the Middle Ages by the name of the Blood Shower — is streaming through the heavens: Faustus sees in its name an omen of hope.

> See, see, where Christ's blood streams in the firmament!
> One drop would save my soul, half a drop: ah, my Christ! —
> Ah, rend not my heart for naming of my Christ! —
> Yet will I call on him: O, spare me, Lucifer!

Dazed by the succession of shocks, he at last has strength enough to turn towards the glad omen. But

[1] Compare, in Modern Reader's Bible, Introduction to *Job*, and notes to *Job*, sections xliv and xlv.

it is gone. The Aurora has flashed out as rapidly as i had streamed into the sky. And in its place the heavy bank of clouds has begun to move up the heavens, blotting out star after star, taking cloud shapes of beetling mountains, yawning caverns, threatening arms.

Where is it now? 'tis gone: and see, where God
Stretcheth out his arm, and bends his ireful brows!
Mountains and hills, come, come, and fall on me,
And hide me from the heavy wrath of God!
No, no!
Then will I headlong run into the earth:
Earth, gape! O, no, it will not harbour me!
You stars that reigned at my nativity,
Whose influence hath allotted death and hell,
Now draw up Faustus, like a foggy mist,
Into the entrails of yon labouring cloud,
That, when you vomit forth into the air,
My limbs may issue from your smoky mouths,
So that my soul may but ascend to heaven!

The clock strikes the half hour: thoughts of halving of dividing, eternity rush through the sufferer's brain might Faustus live in hell a thousand years, or a hundred thousand, and at last be saved! The clock strikes twelve. As if at a signal, the first blast of the coming tempest rocks the house to and fro: —

Now, body, turn to air,
Or Lucifer will bear thee quick to hell!

The deluge of rain comes pattering upon the roof: —

O soul, be chang'd into little water-drops,
And fall into the ocean, ne'er be found!

The whole sky becomes one sheet of flame full in the face of Faustus: —

> My God, my God, look not so fierce on me!

Then the forked lightning writhes and quivers in flame tongues about him: —

> Adders and serpents, let me breathe a while!

Another flash seems to rend the whole sky in twain: —

> Ugly hell, gape not!

Yet, more dread than the storm on which he is gazing, Faustus is conscious that the room behind him is filling with Presences: without looking round he cries: —

> Come not, Lucifer!
>
> I'll burn my books!

A strange fascination forces him to turn and behold his fate: more terrible to Faustus than Lucifer himself, what he sees is the old familiar figure, in the old place, holding up that BOND which Faustus has himself signed. With his "Ah, Mephistophilis!" the scene closes.

III

Spain, marked off by its geographical situation from the rest of Europe, stamps upon each successive phase of the general history an individuality of its own. There is thus a Spanish Renaissance; and its spirit is reflected in Calderon's version of the Faust Story.[1] We have exalted sentiments — of chivalry, of gallantry, of

[1] I assume the Fitzgerald version of Calderon's play (below, page 485). This is something more than a translation: an example of the "mediating interpretation" discussed below, pages 311–2.

knowledge — fused in an ardor of religious devotion devotion of course of the Catholic type. In an version of the story Christian theology must pla a part; in the *Mighty Magician* we find successiv articles of the faith dilated upon for page after pag with untiring enthusiasm, a devout exuberance reflect ing audiences that only Spain could produce. It i again the religious aspect of magic which is prominent nature powers are seen as the evil counterpart to th sacred might of the holy religion. Lucifer acknowl edges himself as Antichrist, as Satan, as the Serpent as the one who tempted the first father of mankind and vainly tempted its God in his human form; he i the Son of the Morning, fallen from heaven, and goin to and fro in the earth, armed with the very instrumen of hate that blasted him — lightning anticipates hi coming and the thunder rolls behind. He has thu become the god of the lower world: "if false god, tru devil." He makes his appearance to the hero as "portentous glomeration of the storm darkly cast i human form." As feats sampling his powers, he speak a word to the raging tempest, and —

— the word scarce fallen from his lips,
Swift almost as a human smile may chase
A frown from some conciliated face,
The world to concord from confusion slips:
The winds that blew the battle up, dead slain,
Or with their tatter'd standards swept amain
From heav'n; the billows of the erected deep
Roll'd with their crests into the foaming plain;
While the scared earth begins abroad to peep
And smooth her ruffled locks.

Or again, he bids the distant mountain slip its granite anchor that stands fast in creation's centre, and approach, with all its cleaving tackle of pine top-gallanted with cloud and forest-canvas squaring, until it stops at the moment of command. Yet another manifestation of the religious spirit has a distinctive and special interest. It is natural that a Faust should be exhibited as touched with religious scepticism. But this Spanish version carries the story back in time to a point where paganism is dominant, and Christianity is regarded by those around as a kind of sorcery; we thus get, as it were, scepticism inverted, drawing Cipriano away from the reigning paganism, to the very threshold of the Christian verities.

It is religious sentiment then that gives the main color to Calderon's version of the Faust Story. But it is characteristically Spanish that with this is blended romantic gallantry; for the first time a love passion becomes a motive in the temptation of Faust. It gives a double plot to the play; and the two elements are clearly woven together by the opening situation. From sceptical disputations Cipriano is drawn by an impending duel between two of his young friends, rivals for the love of the Christian beauty, Justina. With chivalrous delicacy, to save the maiden's good name from public scandal, Cipriano offers himself as a safe intermediary, to explore the state of things. The tempter standing by sees a chance to secure two victims by a single stroke.

By the quick feelers of iniquity
That from hell's mouth reach through this lower world,

And tremble to the lightest touch of mischief,
Warn'd of an active spirit hereabout
Of the true God inquisitive, and restless
Under the false by which I rule the world,
Here am I come to test it for myself.
And lo! two fools have put into my hand
The snare that, wanting most, I might have miss'd;
That shall not him alone enmesh, but *her*
Whom I have long and vainly from the ranks
Striv'n to seduce of Him, the woman-born. . . .
Each other by each other snaring; yea,
Either at once the other's snare and prey.

The cross-action of a double plot stands clearly revealed. The magic of Lucifer avails so far as to inspire the irresistible love at first sight: a love which the circumstances make dishonorable, since Cipriano presents himself as an intermediary for others. By such mutual passion the two are to be seduced, alike from piety and purity.

When we turn to the foundation elements of the Faust Story, the gaining of the whole world and the losing of the soul, what we see in this version is a world gained and then lost, a soul lost and then regained. And love is the spring which sets the whole movement at work. A year's apprenticeship to Lucifer, deep down in the bowels of the earth, has enabled Cipriano, when he emerges, to wield the whole chain of forces that make up Nature. But to Cipriano the whole world has come to mean simply Justina. All the force of magic is brought to bear upon an innocent Christian maiden; Cipriano, working with circle, pentagram, and trine, seeks to draw her to him, while Lucifer whispers

in the sleeping Justina's ear, and strives to break her virgin constancy. It is a problem of the stage how to present the phenomenon of dreaming. Lucifer is seen whispering; invisible assistants follow his lead with spirit music. What all this presents to the reader is a lovely picture of Spring, of the world renewing itself with sunshine and with leaf, of the kingdom of the rose and the nightingale, and the flower that ever turns adoringly with the sun. What it conveys to the mind of Justina we know by the mutterings of the sleeper: her thoughts have been led to the long struggle she has secretly waged — she hears the old serenading hymns; sees the scholarly figure as if reading under a tree, deadly pale and still as a statue; she is conscious of the street, and the faces eying her, and the cries as to what has become of Cipriano. She wakes; and the figure beside her bed proclaims himself her guardian angel, ready to conduct her to the man she desires.

Justina. 'Twas all a dream! —
Lucifer. That dreaming you fulfill.
Justina. Oh, no, with all my waking soul renounce.
Lucifer. But, dreaming or awake, the soul is one,
And the deed purposed in Heaven's eyes is done.
Justina. Oh CHRIST! I cannot argue — I can pray!

At the word the tempter is gone. Meanwhile Cipriano, working his magic spells, has seen the veiled Justina approach; as he opens his arms to embrace her, the veiled figure discloses a skeleton, and flies shuddering down the wind, with mutterings of Dust, Ashes, Dust! The shock has dissolved all sensual passion; in the wildest of scenes Cipriano demands of the sneering

Lucifer the meaning of it all, what is the "slight impediment" that has blasted the love-charm into an agony. When other means of wringing an answer to this question have failed, Cipriano adjures Lucifer "by the Power that saved Justina": amid thunder and lightning the demon is compelled to name JESUS CHRIST, and must dolefully answer Yea, Yea, Yea, to each passionately recited article of the holy faith. In each case it is the simple magic of the supreme NAME that has shattered in an instant the omnipotence of demonic magic.

How stands it then with the soul of Cipriano? By covenant written in his own blood he has voluntarily surrendered himself; to regain the soul so nearly lost he offers, not redeeming blood alone, but the blood of his own martyrdom. He plunges into the hall of justice, shouts his confession into the general ear of Antioch, and imperiously demands his execution. As he is left to his fate in the deserted judgment-hall, Justina passes into it on her way to the scaffold. The strangest of love-scenes follows. On the brink of martyrdom for her faith, Justina spends her last moments in contact with the noble personality to fight against whose love has been the tragedy of her life. She recovers him from his swoon; hears the marvellous experience by which he has been brought across the gulf that separates pagan from Christian. From the superior height of her lifelong piety she ministers comfort to the religious novice, trembling with doubts of an unpardonable sin, and brings him up to her own standard of rapturous martyrdom.

Oh, we shall die,
And go to heav'n together!

Secure of heavenly mercy, Cipriano is yet weighed down with the thought of his earthly offence against the purity of Justina. But they are on the threshold of death: Justina's secret may be told.

My Cipriano!
Dost thou remember, in the lighter hour —
Then when my heart, although you saw it not,
All the while yearn'd to thee across the gulf
That yet it dared not pass — my telling thee
That only Death, which others disunites,
Should ever make us one? Behold! and now
The hour is come, and I redeem my vow.

IV

The passage from earlier versions to Goethe's poem on Faust is the passage from the naïveté and sentiment of adolescence to the rounded fulness of maturity. The poem is the product and expression of Culture: of all that the most modern age can put into the meaning of that word. Moreover, Culture appears as a supreme motive of life. Harmoniously to develop all our faculties and powers, when fully developed to press these evenly in all directions, this may well become a dominant purpose; in comparison with this, the special motives which may lead others to give their souls — mammon, war, patriotism, the wresting from nature of her secrets, all the traditional causes which raise banners and demand votaries — all these may fall into a

second place. The passion of love, once introduced into the Faust Story by Calderon, never leaves it; but in Goethe's version the love passion becomes only an episode. This broad conception of culture carries with it a spiritual problem of profound import. Are there any bounds to such self-development? In the field of culture does the end justify the means? Or are we to say, with Milton: —

> Knowledge is as food, and needs no less
> Her temperance over appetite, to know
> In measure what the mind may well contain;
> Oppresses else with surfeit; and soon turns
> Wisdom to folly as nourishment to wind.

The conception of limitations upon knowledge is read by Milton, with great skill, into the "forbidden fruit" of the Bible story.[1] Goethe's treatment of the idea is skilful in another way: he connects it with what is the standing difficulty of the Faust Story — the element of magic. The traditionary forms of magic we have had in other versions appear here; but there is something more, and magic is accepted as a dramatic symbol for illegitimate sources of knowledge. The Faust of Goethe, like Doctor Faustus, has run through the circle of the sciences; but, unlike Faustus, he is further a man of artistic sensibilities, profoundly sympathetic with human nature, and a toiler in the cause of the distressed. But at the opening of the poem he has passed into the state of mind in which all things —

[1] Compare such passages of *Paradise Lost* as iv. 222, vii. 542, viii. 323, xi. 87–89.

even culture — appear vanity. It is sheer sincerity of mind and heart, dissatisfaction with the specious knowledge under which science veils its ignorance of deepest things, that leads Faust to what the conventions of the story present as illegitimate modes of knowing. Magic is thus, as regards the spectacle of the play, all that it has been in the other versions, with the addition of a Mephistophelean irony played upon it by the very magician who works it; as regards the underlying philosophy, magic stands for all that may be beyond the bounds of lawful knowledge. It is like the x of an algebraic problem, the relation of which with other things may be fully elaborated without stopping to determine what x is, or whether x has any real existence. Faust risks his soul — if there be any risk — for culture.

As to the poetic form of Goethe's *Faust*, there is no need for critics to discuss it, since it has been formulated in the poem itself. The Prelude on the Stage announces it as German Drama. What German Drama is to mean is brought out by brilliant dialogue between three speakers. The Manager stands for unlimited stage action and spectacle; the Poet represents philosophical speculation as well as creative beauty; Merry-Andrew insists upon the relief element at all points. Free spectacle, free philosophy, free humor: these are the determinants of this German Drama.

To this long, elaborate, subtle poem of Goethe the simple formula of the general Faust Story can be rigidly applied. Only, as is natural, each separate element of the formula in this case expands itself to

something complex.[1] It is best to take the three parts of the formula separately. And first, that which is concerned with the machinery of temptation.

Mephistopheles is the most successful stroke of literary art outside Shakespeare. He has captured the whole literary world. Yet his real position in the action of the poem seems to have been grasped by few. The vast majority of readers and theatre-goers understand Mephistopheles to be "the Devil"; for he says as much. But seeing that the Devil is the prince of liars, this seems a poor argument; all that can be maintained is that any theory of Mephistopheles must explain how he comes to call himself the Devil. Other readers would put it that Mephistopheles is "the Devil modernized." Yet this seems inadequate to the facts of the play. In the prologue Mephistopheles — speaking in the presence of Deity, which would make falsehood pointless — dissociates himself from two things: from the tempting of men in this world, and from any interest in their souls after death. If out of the traditionary Devil we take these two things, what is there left? Another class of interpreters, who are bent upon rationalizing whether the text they are interpreting will bear it or not, would persuade us that Mephistopheles is nothing more than a dramatic symbol for the lower nature of Faust. But how could the lower nature of Faust work miracles, as Mephistopheles is seen doing throughout the whole drama; not only

[1] The application of the triple formula to the different versions of the Faust Story appears in tabular form in the Syllabus below, pages 474–8.

the succession of miracles which make up the magic, but also the particular miracle of restoring to Faust his lost youth? Moreover, all such interpretations ignore that which must be the basis for our conception of Mephistopheles — the Prologue in Heaven. There may be deep meanings in this scene; but what lies on its very surface is that here Mephistopheles, in the presence of Deity, is seen *assuming a rôle which is not his natural rôle.* What he is, is one thing; what he undertakes to represent in the action of the drama, is quite another thing. What he is, is expressed by God Himself in the phrase, a Spirit of Denial. But this Spirit of Denial undertakes, in the one case of Faust, to play the part of "Devil," or the traditional tempter; he does this to show how it might be done; to win a point of argument with the Almighty. And this conception of Mephistopheles playing Devil for Faust runs through the action of the drama to its latest scene.

The theory of Mephistopheles thus narrows itself down to the meaning of the expression, a Spirit of Denial. In determining this, the first thing we note is that the Prologue in Heaven is closely modelled upon the prologue to the *Book of Job*. Unfortunately, this prologue to the *Book of Job* is almost universally misunderstood, owing to an infelicity of translation in ordinary bibles, an infelicity which even King James's version corrects in the margin. The text of our bibles, after saying how the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, adds "and Satan came also among them." The margin gives, as alternative for

Satan, "*the Adversary.*" The point lies in the definite article. The word "Satan," which in Hebrew means "Adversary," is used in Scripture in two very different ways. Satan, as a proper name, is Adversary of God; all that we understand by the Devil. But *the* Satan is the title of an office: this official is "adversary," not of God, but of the saints; and he is adversary of these only in the sense that an inspector, or an examiner, or an auditor, is for the time being the adversary of those he is inspecting or examining, or whose accounts he is auditing. So the Satan of *Job* is an official of God's universe; he comes among the sons of God, and there is no difference between his reception and the reception of the rest.[1] The other sons of God — so we must understand — have been questioned as to their respective provinces, the different worlds; this one who follows announces himself as the Inspector of the Earth, and is questioned by God about Job as the perfect type of His service on this Earth. All this has its counterpart in the prologue to *Faust.* What in *Job* is only implied, is in the other poem given at length: the other sons of God, the Archangels, reporting of their worlds, which they pronounce perfect as on the first day — that great day when all the morning stars sang together at the creation of the Earth, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. Then Mephistopheles comes forward and reports of his world, in which — in a very different sense — things are as they were on that first day.

[1] This is fully discussed in the Modern Reader's Bible, notes to Prologue of *Job*.

What then is the significance of the office expressed in *Job* by the title "Satan"? The Satan is an "adversary," firstly, in the sense that he is the inspector of his province, our Earth: he comes "from going to and fro in the earth and walking up and down in it." Secondly, he is "adversary" in the sense of a questioner, a challenger. When God offers Job as a perfect type of service, the Satan — performing his proper function — challenges this view, and points out another possible interpretation of Job's life: there is no malignity in this, but merely zeal for a high standard of perfection. In the third place, the Satan is "adversary" in the sense that he tempts men: yet not in the hostile spirit of temptation we associate with the other use of "Satan": the temptations of this Satan are only moral exercises, tests of character, the more severe in proportion as the character seems higher. Such spiritual experimentation is no more than is implied in the idea of a state of probation. What appears then as to the Satan of the *Book of Job* amounts to the function of criticism in the spiritual sphere. But criticism is a thing that has two very different aspects. For those on whom it is exercised criticism is a good thing, working for the discrimination between apparent and real. The evil aspect of criticism is that its exercise reacts upon the critic himself, narrowing his sympathy, and predisposing to low views. It is in this way we get the other sense of the word "Satan" in the Bible: the Adversary who has lost all touch with good, and become a hostile force. Spiritual criticism in its full sense enters deeply into

Goethe's poem. Such spiritual criticism combined with faith in God gives the attitude of the Archangels: theirs is not the servile adulation that will deny all difficulties; their motto is, "Mysterious all, yet all is good." The spirit of criticism touching the weariness of Faust's old age produces the mood of scepticism with which the action commences. But criticism become an end in itself, warping the critic to its chilling work, gives us Mephistopheles: he is a Spirit of Denial in the sense of the Arch-Depreciator, whose whole spiritual energy has decomposed into an itch for belittling.

But a great gulf yet to be noted separates Mephistopheles from the Satan of *Job*. Hebrew literature, which has given us the Satan, is distinguished by a total lack of humor. The culture of which Goethe's poem is an expression is saturated by the spirit of humor. This humor, like criticism, has its double aspect. The sense of humor is the most precious endowment of the literary artist, a touchstone for the finest shades of perfect and imperfect. But the free indulgence of humor is a weed of the mind, choking the soil where it has found lodgment, and tending gradually to extirpate all that is not humorous. It is in the latter sense that humor clings to Mephistopheles: the arch-depreciator is also the spirit of cynical humor, which has lost all reverence, from which nothing is sacred. Yet all this leaves the Spirit of Denial a very different thing from the Devil. The zealous hostility of the traditional tempter would be a theme for the cynical irony of Mephistopheles quite as much as the devout

enthusiasm of the Angels. Mephistopheles has not broken with good. His last appearance in the action of the drama reveals a sneaking sense of attraction to the angelic nature, which he blasphemously interprets as a sort of spiritual concupiscence. And the Prologue makes clear that Mephistopheles enjoys his attendance at the levees of Heaven, though the expression he gives to his enjoyment reads as if he were patronizing God.

But Goethe's adaptation of the *Job* prologue to the purposes of his modern poem yields yet another effect, and that of the boldest. Humor in its lower form makes a Mephistopheles; but what of humor in its highest sense? Even this is alien to the Hebrew poem; but Goethe has ventured to hint a God with a sense of humor. This is clearly suggested by the speech which startles so many readers, in which God seems to approve, not indeed Mephistopheles, but at least the function Mephistopheles is to carry out.

> The like of thee have never moved My hate.
> Of all the bold, denying Spirits,
> The waggish knave least trouble doth create.
> Man's active nature, flagging, seeks too soon the level;
> Unqualified repose he learns to crave;
> Whence, willingly, the comrade him I gave,
> Who works, excites, and must create, as Devil.[1]

Dr. Anster's version of the poem at this point introduces a brilliant paraphrase.

[1] The quotations from Goethe's poem are almost exclusively from the version of Bayard Taylor; a few are from Anster: see below, page 487. Very occasionally, to make a point clear, I have made my own version.

Of the Spirits of Denial
The pleasantest, that figures in Man's Trial,
Is Old Iniquity in his Fool's clothing;
The Vice is never heavy upon hands;
Without the Knave the Mystery were nothing.
For Man's activity soon tires,
(A lazy being at the best)
And sting and spur requires.
In indolent enjoyment Man would live,
And this companion, whom I therefore give,
Goads, urges, drives — is devil and cannot rest.

Whether the German word *Schalk* can be stretched so far as to make a basis for this passage, I am not prepared to say; but the idea itself is most suggestive. The Mephistophelean function is thus made equivalent to the relief element in the mediæval drama — the noisy stage business of the Vice or Knave or Fool, introduced to stimulate the flagging attention of the populace assisting at these long-winded spiritual poems. The suggestion seems confirmed by the continuation of the speech, in which the Almighty turns — as if in contrast — to address the angelic hosts.

But ye, pure sons of God, be yours the sight
Of Beauty, each hour brighter and more bright! —

As if the angels represented the developed artistic temperament of the spiritual life, which can endure sustained presentations without needing relief.

The life in all around, below, above,
That ever lives and works — the Infinite
Enfold you in the happy bonds of love! —

The very antithesis of a Mephistopheles whom no single manifestation of life can warm from cynicism.

> And all that flows unfixed and undefined
> In glimmering phantasy before the mind,
> Bid Thought's enduring chain for ever bind.

The angels can maintain the equilibrium of thought in the presence of mystery, in contrast with Faust whose spiritual energies have broken down in scepticism.

Between such a God and such a Mephistopheles a contention is waged. Mephistopheles has sneered at the spiritual restlessness of Faust: God has pronounced this restlessness the embryo of a higher spiritual condition. Mephistopheles, most characteristically, offers to bet: a moment before he had sneered at the idea of tempting poor mortals, but he now says that if he had the authority to do the tempting he could make clear the baselessness of God's confidence in Faust. God bids Mephistopheles take the authority he suggests, and justifies the function of tempting. The terms of the contention are strictly defined: God engages, not that Faust will not sin, but that in nothing Mephistopheles can offer will Faust rest satisfied; Mephistopheles gloats over his undertaking that Faust shall eat dust with a relish. With the machinery of the *Book of Job* to assist, Goethe has thus masked one of the difficulties in the traditional story: we no longer have the buying and selling of a soul — marketing is a serious business — but we have the characteristic Mephistophelean frivolity of a wager over souls. The playing out of this wager is to make the drama of Faust.

And a continuous thread running throughout this drama is the interest of Mephistopheles acting a part that is a novelty to him. No holiest thing would be sacred to Mephistopheles, but diablerie is an inexhaustible field for his special brand of humor; over and above the game he is playing against Faust, he has a game all to himself, in caricaturing the Devil's work in the very act of doing it. Fully to illustrate this would mean transcribing large parts of the poem. A first stroke of it we have in the concluding lines of the prologue, when Heaven has closed, and Mephistopheles finds himself for a moment alone.

I'm very glad to have it in my power
To see him now and then; he is so civil:
I rather like our good old governor —
Think only of his speaking to the Devil!

There would be nothing to smile at in the idea of God's speaking to Mephistopheles, for clearly Mephistopheles is accustomed to attend these assemblies of heaven's hierarchs: what Mephistopheles chuckles at is that the Almighty has inadvertently been civil to one he had that moment constituted Devil! Mephistopheles clearly enjoys the process of incarnating the Devil in visible form — Dog, Scholar, Man of the world; the whole etiquette of Hell is scrupulously observed, and the tempter will not enter Faust's chamber until the knock and invitation to come in has been duly repeated thrice. He works the pentagram foolery for all it is worth, and will not make his exit until, in the most orthodox fashion, a rat has obeyed Beelzebub's sum-

mons to release him. He has roistering fun with the Auerbach drinking party, who have thought they might safely make jokes about the Devil; he caps blasphemies with the Witch in her kitchen, and elaborately explains how the Devil modernized conceals his tail; the one pleasure for which he confesses a weakness is the horrors of Walpurgis Night. Mephistopheles expresses disgust when his magic is called upon to produce the ideal beauty of Helen: he protests he is a romantic fiend, while classical superstitions have a Hades of their own. At one point of the drama he appears on the street, stamping with rage and bursting with suppressed laughter: the rage is the Devil's at the thought of his precious casket finding its way into the coffers of his hereditary enemy the Church; the laughter is at Mephistopheles' realization that he may not relieve his feelings by swearing, since he is already the Devil. In the scene with the Student, Mephistopheles has been pouring a stream of his most cynical depreciation upon all the different sides of academic study: then we have an aside: —

> I'm tired enough of this dry tone, —
> Must play the Devil again, and fully: —

and he proceeds to whisper sensual suggestions into the young man's ear. When Mephistopheles in the shabby gown of a Travelling Scholar confronts Faust, he has an antagonist who can match him, sneer for sneer; yet the academic tramp can at least mystify the great professor, who is not in the secret of the dual personality. Faust has demanded who this vis-

itor, so supernaturally introduced, may be; the answer comes: —

> Part of the power that would
> Still do evil —

so far, the answer describes the Devil; when it adds: —

> — Still does good!

we have the Depreciator gibing at the Devil's ineffectiveness. Again the speaker declares: —

> I am the spirit that evermore denies. —

Thus much Mephistopheles may say for himself: in the lines that follow he voices the hostility to all existence which belongs to the Devil he is personating: —

> And rightly so — for all that doth arise
> Deserves to perish — this distinctly seeing
> No! say I, No! to every thing that tries
> To bubble into being.

When this spirit of hostility has been extended to a fierce tirade against Light itself, Faust brings him down from his high horse with a sneer: his visitor has clearly had a failure on a large scale, and is prudently setting up again in a retail business. Mephistopheles at once drops to his natural tone, and sneers at the Devil's furious assaults on all existence, the deaths that only set young blood circulating, all the elements lost, except indeed Flame which the Devil still keeps to himself. Faust mocks the figure before him, in vain spite clenching its cold devil's fist against the energy of creation: Mephistopheles thinks it time to change the subject and get to business. At the very

end of the action, when at Faust's death the wager is hopelessly lost, Mephistopheles must needs have one more bout of diablerie, in a first-rate mediæval devil struggle over a corpse. But the summoned demons — long-horned and short-horned alike — fly before the advancing angels, and Mephistopheles himself is edged out of the way. He disappears with a final flash of Mephistophelean humor: that he has let himself be diverted from business for the sake of a peep at cherubic charms — and at his age!

This briefest of prologues, assisted by echoes from the biblical *Job*, has sufficed to give an entirely new turn to the machinery of the temptation. The actual temptation of Faust, in Goethe's version, is the presentation to him of the Whole World. The elaboration of this second element in the traditional story accounts for the great bulk of Goethe's poem. He is the first to see the double significance of the term "World" in such a connection. Every man lives at the same time in two worlds: the microcosm of his own individual life, and the macrocosm of the Great World, the universe in which individual lives are small atoms. The distinction of these two worlds underlies the division between the First Part and the Second Part of Goethe's *Faust.* In the First Part we have only the world of the Individual Life. Faust at the outset has all that belongs to the world of scholarly maturity; the action of the poem adds to this the world of social pleasure and a youth miraculously restored: with youth thus added to maturity the whole of the individual life has been

covered. The Second Part presents the Great World, in successive phases. Act I presents the World as Spectacle — Court, Society, Wealth, Pleasure, Beauty. Act II presents the World as Science. Act III presents the World as Art, with the harmony of Classical and Romantic. Act IV presents the World of Power — Glory, State, Enterprise. Not until the fifth Act of the Second Part are the two worlds brought into conflict.[1]

The Easter Eve scene gives us the state of things before the poem opens. Or, if it is to stand as part of the action, the temptation here is internal, subjective, like the ordinary temptations of men and women; Mephistopheles nowhere appears, though a subsequent scene shows that he is privy to all that happens. Such temptation must lie in the ordinary course of nature and human life, including those unexpected turns of events which we call accidents. As in Marlowe's version, we have Faust in his study at midnight; it is a different Faust, and a different study — a vaulted chamber of rich Gothic architecture, filled with books and old manuscripts, apparatus proper to every science, antique furniture bespeaking the connoisseur in art. The moment Faust opens his mouth we feel the influence of the spirit of depreciation; the beautiful apartment is felt by Faust to be a dungeon; all the culture it betokens is only vanity, the vanity of a life spent in learning that nothing is to be truly known. It is this spirit which allures Faust to the magic Book of Nostradamus, that lies gleaming in the moonlight. He has

[1] Compare throughout the Syllabus below, pages 474–8.

opened upon the Sign of Macrocosm: as in some intricate geometrical diagram, the powers which sway universal nature stand supernaturally revealed; and Faust rapturously feels a growing insight into the balanced forces of action and reaction that answer one another like buckets ascending and descending in a well. But the inevitable disappointment follows: the dry light of science that shows so clearly the stream of things can show nothing of the fount from which that stream has flowed. Faust impatiently turns the pages till he lights upon the Sign of Microcosm, that in like mystic symbol reveals so different a world. As his spirit spontaneously draws to this kindred region, strange manifestations are going on all around him; at last, in the heart of a flame, the Spirit of this Earth chants the formula of Life — the Life woven by the twin shuttles of Birth and the Grave upon the loom of Time. Faust advances to embrace the Apparition, but is waved off.

Spirit. Man, thou art as the Spirit, whom thou conceivest,
Not Me.
Faust [*overpowered with confusion*]. Not thee!
Whom then? I! image of the Deity!
And not even such as thee!

Faust is on the verge of a truth which might shatter all temptation — that, created in the image of God, he is no fit mate for any lesser being. But accident interposes—or must we say, a contrivance of the tempter? The opening door reveals the feeble smile of the self-satisfied pedant Wagner; and Faust must repel the boredom of Wagner's hero-worship with irritated depre-

ciation of everything that makes an ideal for the routine scholar. When he is again alone, the mood of depression continues. Midnight has by now given place to the first faint signs of another day; as the growing light reveals the various objects in the room, each is to Faust the memento of some disappointed aspiration. By a sudden crescendo of this dawning — or, shall we say, by a supernatural touch of Mephistopheles — a single article upon a single shelf starts for a moment into prominence: the POISON FLASK suggests the plunge into the unseen that shall solve all life's mysteries. His bosom swelling with the thought, Faust opens the casement, and gazes on the morning mists flushing with the near approach of day. His act shall be accomplished with due ceremony; he takes from a secret receptacle the most precious of his art treasures, and, as the crystal goblet glitters in the growing light, pours into it the dark brown liquid. The first ray of the rising sun flashes upon the goblet, and Faust raises it to his lips. But the same first ray of the sun is the signal for a merry peal of bells from the neighboring minster, proclaiming Easter morning; and the Choir in the minster yard break into the Easter Hymn, telling of the triumph over death. Recollections of Faust's boyhood, and the happy days of faith, of Spring sports, and Sabbath stillnesses that came like a kiss from heaven — all these rush in like a flood upon his heart: the goblet drops, and earth has gained its child again.

Clearly this internal tempting will not serve: the tempter must incarnate himself in visible form. In what form? Mephistopheles' plan of temptation is

threefold. His main trust is to the mere presence of the tempter, that will freeze up all the spiritual fervor of Faust. Magic shows are to shake reason into scepticism. Then will be the time for sensual suggestions; yet these — so soon exhausted — must not stand alone; Faust must be left free to indulge his loftiest aspirations, until the sense of distraction between his higher and lower nature shall bring some moment of sudden yielding. The three strains of the temptation symbolize themselves in the three forms Mephistopheles is seen to wear: the Dog is the natural type of human companionship; the Travelling Scholar of the Middle Ages—flitting from university to university, his whole life dissipated in endless questionings—leads the attack upon reason; the Gay Companion, all in scarlet and silk, in his hat the cock's feather as symbol of the great denier, invites to the world of sense delights. All the while Mephistopheles, as we have seen, is getting his full fun out of each successive phase of diablerie that his schemes may require. Moreover, his rôle of Devil entitles him to bands of Attendant Spirits, who hover about unseen, and play up to Mephistopheles' lead. Faust has permitted a sample of the tempter's art. As voices are heard singing, their words realize themselves in a phantasmagoria like an opium dream: the frescoed vault above Faust's head changes into starlit heavens, with children of heaven descending in billowy motion to meet loving ones from below; while, stretching into the distance, rivers of wine seem foaming over beds of precious stones, and on green hill-slopes or in floating islands winged throngs drink deep of bliss. Thus delicately comes the first faint suggestion of

sense delight. Later, a sneer at the poison cup that was never drunk reveals to Faust how the ideal of holy innocence which that morning had checked his suicidal impulse is all known to the mocking demon at his side: in a sudden upsurging of revulsion Faust pours out an utterance which unites all the ideals that have ever swayed mankind in one common Curse. An answer seems to come from the invisible: as the Attendant Spirits sing, a magic vision displays a cursed universe tumbling to pieces, and out of the ruins a new and fair world springing up — a world which, the Spirits sing, Faust shall build within his secret heart.[1] Thus delicately comes the enticement to exchange the life of reason for the life of self. And at last Faust lets Mephistopheles show the world he has to offer. In scornful confidence that the shallow sneerer before him can find nothing to tempt his own higher nature, Faust pronounces a wish that the first satisfying moment may be his last: unconsciously he has echoed the very terms of the wager laid in heaven. And at first his confidence seems justified: the miserable *bêtise* of the Auerbach revellers can excite in Faust nothing but disgust. To Mephistopheles it suggests an explanation for Faust's immobility: that the man has entirely outgrown his youth. Then the action takes us to the Witch's Kitchen: amid a *tour de force* of devilry, in which Mephistopheles is finding his recreation, the necessary miracle is wrought, and, in Faust, all the

[1] The suggestion in Bayard Taylor's note that this second song is by other singers — Good Spirits seeking to check Faust in his temptation — seems to me entirely baseless. It is out of harmony both with the words of the song and the general movement of the scene.

susceptibility of first youth is added to the wisdom of mature life.

The Margaret Episode is in form two series of love scenes separated by what is called the Forest and Cavern scene. In such form we see reflected Mephistopheles' plan of distracting Faust between the impulses of his higher and his lower nature. In a rapid succession of the simplest incidents we watch the girlish charms of Margaret drawing on Faust's new youth to the rapture of the lover's first kiss. Then Mephistopheles hurries him away: the Forest and Cavern scene stands for those times in which Faust is left free to his spiritual communings with the innermost heart of Nature. Mephistopheles is seen ascending the mountain side: Faust realizes the hateful association binding him to this being whose poisonous presence will blast all his highest feelings, who will bring him back moreover to that sweet passion which, Faust knows, means the betraying of innocent trust. Mephistopheles is soon heard distilling cool cynicism upon the pantheist's transcendental rapture; a rapture not inconsistent with a fleshlier ecstasy as he thinks of the "poor monkey" moping in her solitary home. The warmly colored picture of Margaret, disturbing the purity of his spiritual communings, works up Faust to an agony of distraction: he sees himself reflected in the mountain torrents all around him, as if foaming on to his abyss he must needs drag down a peasant's cot in his ruin. The distraction brings the sudden yielding: he bids the Devil do his worst, but do it quickly. So Faust moves on consciously to the undoing of Margaret. But not of Margaret alone. A

sleeping potion is to soothe the invalid mother while the lovers may find opportunity of meeting: but Mephistopheles "has his amusements too," and the mother never wakes again. The soldier brother, drawn to his home by whispers of gossip, disturbs the midnight serenaders: Faust strikes and Mephistopheles parries, and the brother bleeds to death, with his last breath blurting out his sister's sin. Faust has to fly for his life, with two deaths on his conscience; and Margaret is left to endure alone the dreadful descent to ruin. The interval of absence is marked by the dramatic digression of the Walpurgis Night: the soft Spring evening gradually transformed to haunting forms of fancy; Mammon illuminating all his veins of rich metal till they shine through the crust of the earth; the passion of the winds as they sweep through groaning forests growing articulate with bandied blasphemies of riding witches in mid air; the Brocken mount lit by a hundred watch fires as if a scene of some popular fair translated into demonic orgy. Every form of the supernatural has a place on this magic night; amongst them clairvoyance holds up to Faust a vision of a girl, gliding with bound feet, and on her throat a crimson stain no wider than a knife's edge. The thread of the action resumes with the sudden knowledge of all that has happened to his love in Faust's absence: how in prison she awaits execution as murderess of her own babe. Mephistopheles feels strong enough to venture his master sneer: *She is not the first!* A spasm of revulsion rouses Faust to the highest tension of will: he turns on Mephistopheles, and by the strength of the compact between them forces the Devil to do a work

of salvation. But though magic horses bring them to the prison, they are too late: the body is there, but the mind is gone. In a succession of agonies Faust seeks to make Margaret understand: her distracted brain is busy with scenes of the old love time, or horrors of the flight and murder, or finally with the scene of execution — tolling bell, broken wand, bitter wound, silence of the grave. At this point Mephistopheles enters to force the pair away. Margaret sees the Devil claiming her beyond the bounds of this world: the shock restores sanity for a moment, and, casting herself on the judgment of God, she sinks in death. Mephistopheles points to the corpse-like face, and cries, She is judged! A voice from heaven pronounces that she is saved. As Faust lets Mephistopheles hurry him from the scene, he is followed by a sweet call, ever becoming more distant, of Henry! Henry! The first thought of the saved Margaret has been for the salvation of her lover.

In this last detail we have anticipated what will belong to the third element in the Faust Story, which deals with the losing or saving of the soul. Our immediate concern is with the idea of gaining the whole world: how does the account stand at the conclusion of the First Part of the poem? From the outset of the action Faust has possessed in himself the world of broad culture that crowns the maturity of a scholar's life. Subsequent scenes have added to this the world of social life and gaiety. Further, without losing any part of his maturity, Faust has had miraculously restored to him the freshness of youth, with the capacities for passionate love that only youth can fully possess. The paradox

of youth and maturity possessed together has offered to Faust the whole world of the individual life.

What stands as the brief opening scene of Part Two is in reality an Interlude between the divisions of the poem. It belongs to Goethe's scheme that the world of the individual life and the great world shall be kept entirely distinct; it is remarkable that the whole of the Second Part — until we reach the final scene that is really an epilogue to the whole poem — ignores altogether the Margaret Episode. The Interlude that effects this separation of the two parts of the story is one of the loveliest pieces of symbolism in all poetry. Faust is seen in the midst of a pleasant landscape, bedded on flowery turf, exhausted and restless with the agony of the separation from Margaret. For the forces which are to soothe this restlessness we have open air Nature as a region of moral indifference; Spring, which is the healing of Winter; the craft of Elves — neutral spirits, distinct from the war of angels and demons. Amid low æolian music and fairy song Night advances through her four pauses: Twilight, with misty veil shutting weary eyelids; Starlight, and the pomp of the protecting Moon; Lethe, that cancels the hours when alike pain and bliss have fled away; Dawn, to shed color and form through the shadow-rest of morning, till sleep is only a shell to be broken through. The careering Hours are leading on the triumph of the advancing Sun, light translated into sound: rocky portals of cloud crash open as the Light draws near, with pealing rays and trumpet-blazes, sound that like the music of the spheres is too loud to be

heard. Faust awakens, oblivious of his past, with fresh vigor to seek the highest life for which he is panting. He stands watching the growing light, until the sun shall come forth over the mountain tops. But the sudden blaze blinds him: he turns his back upon it, and what he sees before him is the cataract smitten into rainbow tints by the level rays of morning. In the sudden relief Faust sees an emblem of life:

Symbol of human striving's best direction;
Not light direct, but rainbow-like reflection.

Not attainment, but ceaseless endeavor: the symbolism of the Interlude has anticipated the thought which is to be the culmination of the whole poem.

The Second Part of the poem is to present the Great World in successive phases, and Act I gives us the world as Spectacle: as all that we mean when we talk of "seeing life": as many-sided life, as Wealth, Pleasure, Beauty. It centres naturally around the Court of the Emperor. The Emperor is seen in full court, Mephistopheles acting temporarily as Court Fool— no bad suggestion of his actual position in the universe. Dullness marks the opening of the action, as successive ministers in droning speeches detail cares of state; Mephistopheles quickens the movement with a sprightly suggestion that all these troubles are varied forms of the lack of money. We reach the first of the three main motives in this first Act. It is as if magic were being carried into the field of political economy, for what Mephistopheles suggests is a bubble scheme of paper

currency, duly secured on the basis of the buried wealth of the Middle Ages which is legally the property of the Emperor. This motive is no more than opened when interruption brings the second motive — the Carnival Masquerade. This is the symbolic spectacle of life in its varied phases. With stage effects of color and rhythmic dance flower girls pose in successive groups, and opposite them gardeners bearing fruit as the masculine side of the pastoral; what at first seems an incongruity — a match-making mother seeking to get her daughter off her hands — is a link to change repose into motion, and there follow fishers and bird-catchers, with nets, fishing-rods, limed twigs, and the like, who disperse themselves among the girls, with reciprocal attempts to win, catch, escape, hold fast: life is made to appear as a game of the sexes. To this pastoral mask there comes a pastoral antimask; boisterous wood-cutters, pulcinelli or grotesque loafers, slobbering parasites, drunken abandon with clinking glasses. The pastoral is followed by the poetic presentation of life, or mask of poets — poets of nature, courtly and knightly minstrels, sentimentalists, night and churchyard poets: the section is mercifully shortened by the device that each poet interrupts his predecessor before any can get a hearing. Now we have a classical mask; the exquisite Graces, the sombre Fates; the Furies are announced, but appear transformed into society ladies, who can do their work of malice and poison with due decorum. Next follows a mediæval morality: the elephant of Power guided by a delicate woman (Prudence), on which rides throned Victory, with Hope and Fear on either side:

Detraction as Vice of this morality appears under the suggestive name of Zoilo-Thersites, and at the touch of the herald's wand the monster falls in two as an adder combined with a bat. We take a step nearer to the other motives of the first Act when the mask of Wealth follows: the dragon chariot of Plutus is driven by the lovely boy-charioteer who is Poesy — explained as intellectual wealth — and scatters among the crowd pearls that turn to crawling beetles in vulgar hands; the anti-mask is Mephistopheles as sneering Penury. At last we have a nature mask of the Court: the Emperor appears as the great god Pan, the courtiers as nymphs, satyrs, fauns, giants; gnomes, as surgeons of the mountains, lead the Emperor to the Fount of Wealth — Plutus's coffer, now transformed into a volcanic crater overflowing with molten gold. As the Emperor stoops over it his beard catches fire: magic flame wraps the whole scene. There is a moment's panic, and then the other elements come to the rescue, and with suggestions of quaking earth, cooling airs, trickling and softly drenching rains, the curtain descends. The transition is to a scene of repose, and the gardens of the court. Here the news comes of the completely realized currency scheme. Every class of society is seen rich and contented, all able to realize their own special predilection; the old Court Fool, whom Mephistopheles had superseded, like the rest has his share of ready money, and promptly gives up foolery for serious life.

But an unexpected turn is given to the action. Wealth has brought the demand for art and beauty; nothing less will serve than the ideal beauty of man and

woman in Paris and Helen. Mephistopheles protests that his magic jurisdiction does not extend to the classic; but he gives way, and we reach the third motive of Act I. It was *ideal* beauty that was demanded: the word suggests the Platonic theory of ideas — class terms and the question of their real or nominal existence, which dominated philosophy for a thousand years. It is difficult to discuss such a speculation except in metaphorical language; among other metaphors the ideas were made the *moulds* of things, as distinguished from the things so moulded; mould suggests *matrix*, matrix is of the same root as *mother*, and, fortunately, an obscure passage of Plutarch refers to an oriental "Mystery of the Mothers." Thus the Platonic Theory of Ideas emerges as the Magic Mystery of the Mothers. With burlesque awe and mystic tremulousness Faust is despatched on a quest for "shapeless forms in liberated spaces," "Formation, Transformation," "the Eternal Mind's eternal re-creation."

Faust. Where is the way?
Mephistopheles. No way! — To the Unreachable,
Ne'er to be trodden! A way to the Unbeseechable,
Never to be besought! . . . Downward thy being strain!
Stamp and descend, stamping thou'lt rise again.

Flirtation and courtly trifling fill the interval of waiting. At last, in the dimly lighted Hall of the Knights, the court await a scene of theatrical magic; the Court Astrologer, or chief dreamer of the age, is naturally stage manager; Mephistopheles peeps over the prompter's box, for "prompting is the Devil's oratory." Amid rolling mists that distil music as they move a classic

scene is visible, with pillared shaft and triglyph; from the incense-steam gradually a Helena and a Paris appear. A rapid fire of running comments at every point gives us courtly criticism of the classical antique. The piece is clearly the Rape of Helena. But it is not destined to reach its natural dénouement. Like a Pygmalion smitten with passion for the Galatea he has sculptured, Faust falls helplessly in love with "the spectral Helen he himself has made." A magic "mystery" had of course involved a magic "key"; and this key is still in the hand of Faust. When the unendurable point is reached of Paris bearing Helen away, Faust rushes into the scene, and wields his key in resistance. A terrific explosion follows this clash of real and ideal: amid darkness and tumult the first Act comes to its end, the final detail having laid the foundation for the two Acts that follow.

The first four Acts, though parts of a common movement, may be read each as an independent poem. The first Act has presented the world as Spectacle: the second gives us the world revealed as Science. Only, this Science has to be understood in a somewhat restricted sense: as analysis and synthesis, as processes of evolution. More precisely still, the word "genesis"—the coming into being of things — expresses the idea binding the complex details of the second Act into a clear unity. It has a main plot and an underplot; the main plot links the Act with the rest of the poem, the underplot emphasizes the scientific nature of the material employed. The main plot centres around Faust and Mephistopheles. Ideal beauty of Helen, which at the outset is no more

than a vision in the mind of Faust, is throughout the movement of this second Act seeking genesis as a reality; in the atmosphere of the Classical Walpurgis Night it makes successive stages of approach to this, then disappears to attain complete reality in the Helen of Act III. But Faust has a perpetual antimask in Mephistopheles. As Faust is in search of ideal beauty, so through the grotesquenesses of Walpurgis Night Mephistopheles seeks ideal ugliness, and reaches a climax in the hideous Phorkyad whose form he will wear in Act III. The underplot is given up to competing theories of scientific genesis. One form of genesis is the crystallization of laboratory experiment: this at the opening of Act II has given us, not *homo*, but *homunculus*, limited by the phial in which he has been chemically generated, like a chick that cannot break its shell; throughout the movement of the Act he is seeking to overcome this limitation, and realize complete being. The course of this movement brings before us competing Fire and Water creation, Eruptive and Sedimentary, the philosophy of Anaxagoras and the philosophy of Thales: Thales triumphs, and Water genesis holds the field. But this Water genesis has still to pass through ascending stages of definiteness; each true stage flanked, as it were, by a false form of imperfect genesis. For the false forms we have the Kabiri to suggest self-generation (or parthenogenesis); the Telchines, artificial formation; the Dorides, the union of mortals with immortals. Over against these Nereus stands for the general idea of Water genesis; Proteus reveals stages of evolution. For climax to a classical presentation of

Water genesis we should have expected the myth of Aphrodite rising from the foam of the sea. But Aphrodite, as a goddess, would not fit into Goethe's scheme; he installs the more nearly human figure of Galatea in Aphrodite's place. When the triumph of Galatea has brought the foundation step of evolution in simple sex-union, the matter of the underplot has worked itself out.

The movement starts from the Laboratory of Wagner. The most modern laboratory has for its supreme problem by synthesis to produce organic life. Assisted by the magic of Mephistopheles what Wagner has produced is no mere protoplasm: Homunculus is a completely organized being, whose first word hails his creator as Daddy, and recognizes a cousin in Mephistopheles. Yet he is but generative flame, confined by a glass phial as by a shell; he can float in his phial through space, and take part in things, but must break through the phial before he can attain real flesh and blood existence. Faust is still in the swoon caused by his yearning for Helen; at the suggestion of Mephistopheles the generative flame in the phial shines over the sleeper, and in the brain of Faust is formed the loveliest of dreams — the swan-birth of Helen. More than this is not possible in the gloomy regions of the north: the scene must change to the Classical Walpurgis Night. This of course means the indiscriminate massing together of Greek mythologic creations, as the other Walpurgis Night was a massing of northern superstitions. The scene is the Pharsalian fields, still haunted by the ghost of Greek liberty. The watch-fires burn blue as there come hovering over

the region Mephistopheles and the flaming phial, with Faust carried still in his state of unconsciousness. The arrangement that the three shall roam independently, and meet at intervals, has the effect of interweaving the separate threads of the plot into a dramatic picture. Faust awakes from his swoon as he touches the land that bore Helen. It is easy to follow Faust as he moves amidst the classical forms around him: drinking in the beauty of the beautiful, appreciating the solid strength of the repulsive, responding to the poetic memories of all. He rides on the back of the Centaur Chiron, on which once Helen had ridden; Chiron bears him to the house of Manto to be healed of his love. Faust will not be healed: but from the house of Manto there is a path down to the realms of Persephone. Faust is seen no more in this Act; but we shall hear how from this region of Persephone Helen has ascended to meet Faust in the third Act. It is equally easy to follow Mephistopheles enjoying himself on this Classical Walpurgis Night: how he caps puns with the Griffins, cuddles the Sphinxes, flirts with the Lamiæ, and finally is coached by the hideous Phorkyads for his part in Act III.

The rest of the Act centres about Homunculus seeking genesis as a real being. Earthquake appears on this night of magic, and with Atlas-like gesture has pushed through the earth's green surface a newly formed mountain. Bushy forest spreading soon clothes its face. Life begins to appear on this new world: griffins and emmets are seen pushing their gold trade; pygmies, with dactyls for slaves, organize war, and

prey on the ranks of herons; a moral element seems to come into the new world when cranes — the very cranes who once avenged Ibycus — fly over the scene threatening judgment from on high. It is at this point that Homunculus appears, following two philosophers he has heard disputing of nature: Anaxagoras contending for fire and the eruptive theory of creation, Thales claiming the creative supremacy of water. Pointing to the new world created in a single night Anaxagoras seems to have the advantage, and he offers Homunculus the sovereignty of the realm. But Homunculus is cautious, and will first hear Thales; Thales points to the advancing army of cranes, who swoop down upon the pygmies, and bring retribution for the slaughtered herons. Anaxagoras, worsted for the moment, appeals to the Moon, whose fearful craters proclaim her the head of the eruptive interest. The appeal is instantly answered: at first it seems as if the Moon itself was descending, but the bright disk turns black, and a mass of meteoric stone blots out the new-made world and the life that is upon it into a shapeless mass of ruin. The philosophy of Anaxagoras is routed, and Homunculus attaches himself to Thales and the philosophy of water.

For all the rest of the Act we are in the realm of water genesis. The scene has gradually moved: from the Pharsalian Fields, on a tributary of the river Peneus, to the river itself; now to the rocky coves of the Ægean sea, in which the river Peneus empties itself. It is a scene of beautiful moonlight; in exquisite songs the Sirens interpret each phase like a Chorus. It is amid such surroundings that we have presented,

in alternation, the imperfect and the true forms of genesis. First, Nereids and Tritons, wonder-forms of the sea, are seen setting out with noisy joy on an Argonautic Expedition to the domain of the lofty Kabiri: the reference is to an ancient Mystery of the island peoples, compounded of Phœnician sailor lore and Egyptian phallic worship. But — for all their vaunting triumph as they come back — the golden fleece they bring turns out to be no more than the ugly, one-sex, dwarf Kabiri, — the phallic element of the Mystery. All mock these malformations, "with earthen pots for models," strange gods "ever begetting themselves anew": the suggestion is of self-generation, one-sex generation, perhaps the imperfect reproduction modern science studies as parthenogenesis. Meanwhile, Homunculus has been brought by Thales to Nereus, in whom all beings of the sea world find a common ancestor; Nereus has grudgingly given the hint that Proteus is the wondrous personage from whom to hear the plan of Being and its transformations. The second of our ascending stages thus brings us to the beautiful Greek myth of Proteus, whose very name is of kindred root with our modern protoplasm: the Proteus who, grasped firmly by his captor, changes into every form of things in nature, yet at the end is found one and the same! From this Proteus Homunculus learns the law of the evolution he seeks: —

On the broad ocean's breast must thou begin!
One starts there first within a narrow pale,
And finds, destroying lower forms, enjoyment:
Little by little, then, one climbs the scale,

And fits himself for loftier employment. . . .
There, by eternal canons wending,
Through thousand, myriad forms ascending,
Thou shalt attain in time to Man.

But the human will be the final term of the scale of evolution: —

Struggle not to higher orders!
Once Man, within the human borders,
Then all is at an end for thee.

To the general conception of Water genesis this second idea has been added of evolutionary stages; there is still lacking the indispensable first link of the ascending chain. But before this another mode of imperfect genesis must appear. The Telchines of Rhodes ride past on sea-horses and dragons, wielding the trident of Neptune which they forged, and boasting how —

We were the first whose devotion began
To shape the high Gods in the image of Man.

But this is mocked at as artificial creation, dead works cast in bronze: their shining forms of Gods an earthquake was able to overthrow. Now the Sirens see the doves of Aphrodite descending to head the procession of Galatea her successor: in Galatea will be attained the final triumph — the love union of sexes that makes the first link of the evolutionary chain. But even as the procession is passing by, yet another false note is to be struck: the lovely Dorides — the Graces of the sea — turn to ask from Nereus the boon of immortality for the sailor boys they have rescued and made their loves. The boon is denied: the union of mortals with

immortals is as fluctuating as the waves on which the Sea Graces are riding. Now the full triumph of Galatea fills the scene: Galatea rides on her shell, and all the creatures of the sea fall into the procession; the universal adoration proclaims water the source of life, water the only force for its sustentation.

> From Water was everything first created!
> Water doth everything still sustain!
> Ocean, grant us thine endless reign!
> If the clouds thou wert sending not,
> The swelling streams wert spending not,
> The winding rivers bending not,
> And all in thee were ending not,
> Could mountains, and plains, and the world itself, be?
> The freshest existence is nourished by thee.

The head of the procession has passed around a bend of the coast when a new mystery is added: around the spot reached by the shell on which Galatea rides a fiery marvel lights up with more than moonlight the heaving billows. Drawn by the force of Eros to the side of Galatea, the generative flame has broken through the phial of glass, and Homunculus has attained the first link in the evolutionary chain of real existence.

The world has been presented in the form of Spectacle, and again in the form of Science: the third Act is to present it in the form of Art. But it is the *whole world* that is to be so presented. It is a leading idea of Goethe, and his great contribution to the philosophy of poetry, that the wholeness of art is to be found in the equable blending and harmony of Classic and Romantic,

the foundation conceptions of art laid by the Hellenic peoples and the exuberance of free invention achieved by mediæval Europe. The embodiment of this idea in the love of Helen and Faust is a masterpiece of our poet; one knows not whether to admire more the profundity of the idea, or the exquisite poetic scenes in which it is enshrined, or again the perfection of technical detail with which the design is carried into execution.

The Act opens as Greek tragedy; the illusion is complete, and we can hardly persuade ourselves that we are not reading a drama of Æschylus englished. The scene is before the Palace of Menelaus in Sparta. The scenic conventions of the Greek stage are maintained; in particular, the trimeter iambic rhythm, which is the blank verse of Greek drama, and which, though differing only by a single additional foot from our own blank verse, yet sounds so strange to English or German ears, dominates this part of the poem, varied of course by the lyrical measures of the Chorus. We have the slow, sculpturesque movement of long-drawn dialogue with which ancient tragedy elaborates the opening situation. This situation is the return from Troy; and Helen, with a Chorus of captive Trojan maidens, has been sent forward by her husband to make preparations for a sacrifice, in consultation with the Stewardess of the house — the old crone whose Phorkyad hideousness, we know, conceals Mephistopheles. Forensic contests of age and youth, ugliness and beauty, are waged between the Stewardess and the Chorus. Reminiscences of the loves of Helen make preparation for the one more love which is to follow.

At the right point, the accelerated rhythm of long trochaics brings out the mystery that is suddenly perceived in the general situation: Helen is to prepare a sacrifice, but the victim of that sacrifice has not been indicated, and the old Stewardess catches the idea that Helen and the Chorus are themselves to be victims to the outraged love of Menelaus. The movement begins to advance as the Stewardess suggests the only way of escape: in what appears to be a Messenger's Speech broken by dialogue she tells what has happened during Menelaus's long absence from his home — how a daring breed of strangers, pressing forth from Cimmerian night, have occupied the surrounding country, and built their inaccessible fortresses. Here only will be a place of refuge; and, as trumpets of Menelaus sound an advance in the distance, Helen must make up her mind at once. The drift of the whole Act is conveyed in the answer of Helen.

> What I may venture first to do, have I devised.
> A hostile Dæmon art thou, that I feel full well,
> And much I fear thou wilt convert the Good to Bad.
> But first to yonder fortress now I follow thee;
> What then shall come, I know: but what the Queen thereby
> As mystery in her deepest bosom may conceal,
> Remain unguessed by all! Now, Ancient, lead the way!

What will follow will be no forsaking of the Classic under temptation of the Romantic, but a marvellous and unlooked for blending of the two.

The modern stage supplants the ancient as mists fill the whole scene; the mists dispersing reveal a new scene, with the intricate beauties of Gothic architecture,

a "labyrinth of many castles wondrously combined in one." Faust and his fellow-knights, in mediæval armor, with all the pomp of chivalry, receive Helen at once as guest and queen. The moment Faust speaks, the ear catches our modern blank verse supplanting the strange Greek metre. As the scene advances there is another rhythmic surprise: rhyme, the great innovation in poetic form achieved by mediæval poetry, strikes with novel effect the acute ear of Helen.

Helen. Yet now instruct me wherefore spake the man
With strangely-sounding speech, friendly and strange:
Each sound appeared as yielding to the next,
And, when a word gave pleasure to the ear,
Another came, caressing then the first.
Faust. If thee our people's mode of speech delight,
O thou shall be enraptured with our song,
Which wholly satisfies both ear and mind!
But it were best we exercise it now:
Alternate speech entices, calls it forth.
Helen. Canst thou to me that lovely speech impart?
Faust. 'Tis easy: it must issue from the heart;
And if the breast with yearning overflow,
One looks around, and asks —
Helen. Who shares the glow.
Faust. Nor Past nor Future shades an hour like this;
But wholly in the Present —
Helen. Is our bliss.
Faust. Gain, pledge, and fortune in the Present stand:
What confirmation does it ask?
Helen. My hand.

The advancing trumpets of Menelaus are answered by explosions from the castle, and suggestions of modern gunpowder warfare mingle with the scene of

mediæval chivalry. The marshalling of the defending hosts recalls the barbarian races who have overrun the Europe of the Greeks — Germans, Goths, Franks, Saxons, Normans. All this culminates in Arcadia — "Arcadia in Sparta's neighborhood" — presented in sonorous verse as the union of Classic and Romantic in the domain of external nature.

With the change to this Arcadian scene a further stage in the movement of the Act has commenced. We hear of the love of Helen and Faust as crowned by offspring, Euphorion, "future master of all beauty." We see the child in his broidered garments, with tassels from his shoulders flying, fillets fluttering round his bosom: the ornate profuseness of romance in its first freshness. Again we see the boy skipping and leaping higher and higher, gently restrained by his anxious parents. Now, Euphorion winds in dance through the ranks of the Chorus, romantic exuberance fitting itself to classic form; now, he insists upon passion, and bears away captive a girl of the Chorus who turns to flame in his arms. More than this, Euphorion, vainly called back by his parents, leaps farther and farther up the rocks; stands a youth in arms in the midst of Pelops' land, kindred in soul; the path to Glory opens before him, and he leaps from the rocks. Amid cries of Icarus, Icarus, he falls before his parents' eyes. A pause in the movement gives opportunity for a dramatic digression, in which Goethe pays his tribute to Byron: pioneer of the new poetry that shall blend classic and romantic, yet diverted — such is Goethe's thought — from his true poetic path by fatal sympathy

with the political struggles of Greece. The Act now reaches its closing movement. The voice of Euphorion has summoned Helen to the lower world, from which she had come; her garments alone remain in the arms of Faust, and, dissolving into clouds, raise him aloft and bear him away: the Mephistopheles within the Phorkyad interjecting the depreciatory interpretation that, if the talents of ancient poetry are not to be given, at least their costume may be lent. The Leader of the Chorus follows Helen to the Shades, rejoicing in the return from the romantic to the classic: —

> from the magic freed,
> The old Thessalian trollop's mind-compelling spell,
> Freed from the jingling drone of much-bewildering sound,
> The ear confusing, and still more the inner sense.

Not so the rest of the Chorus: their attraction to the Elements brings before us the enduring achievement of Greek poetry which has forever steeped every detail of out-of-door nature in the charm of imaginative suggestiveness. One part of the Chorus pass away to become Wood Spirits, with swaying rustle of branches to lure the rills of life to the twigs; another part will bend and fluctuate as Nymphs of the Reeds; yet another part will hasten with the brooklets along meadow and pasture and meandering curves; a fourth part will girdle the vine-covered hillside, and lead on the noisy vintage joy. The curtain falls on the empty scene. But for a moment the Phorkyad is seen in front of the curtain: then the Phorkyad disguise is thrown off, and Mephistopheles makes his bow to the audience as magic manager of the whole Act.

There is a fourth aspect under which the whole world is to be presented: as Power in all its forms, as War, Glory, State, Enterprise. There is just the same fulness of presentation as in the other Acts, but the ideas of the fourth Act can be much more briefly stated. The clouds which bore Faust away from the scenes of Act III deposit him, for Act IV, upon the lofty heights of mountains; Mephistopheles makes a burlesque entry to the same scene with the aid of the Seven League Boots. Faust revels in the sublime scenery; Mephistopheles works out the curious theory that these rocky vastnesses are nothing but the bottom of Hell coughed up by the demons under the irritation of Hell's sulphurous atmosphere; he claims to speak with authority, for was not the Devil there to see? These mountain heights are the lofty mountain from which, in another historic temptation, all the kingdoms of the world and the glory of them were visible; and once more there is a tempter to offer these varied glories to Faust. But only one of them has any attraction for Faust: this is the glory of Enterprise — beneficent enterprise, to contend against the lordly Ocean, and win from his barren grasp stretches of land for the service of man. No sooner has this first motive of Enterprise been opened than we pass to the second motive of Act IV — War. The connecting link is that rival emperors are contending for universal dominion; magic shall give the advantage to one of them, and then Faust for his reward shall demand the sea strand as subject for his enterprise. The scenes of the fourth Act are thus filled with the spectacle of war — that

mingling of power and glory which during the greater part of the world's history has proved the master temptation to strong souls. Of course, the element of burlesque is always at hand: like king David Mephistopheles has his three mighty men of war, and these are Bully, Grip, and Hang-on. It is the magic commanded by Mephistopheles that determines the victory: the secret powers that lurk in crystals are enlisted; spectral floods and spectral fires close the paths of the foe; spectral chivalry fills the cast-off armor accumulated through centuries of mediæval warfare. The motive of War passes naturally into the motive of State as the victorious empire is seen organizing itself into a constitution that shall last forever. We have before us the hierarchy of Arch-Marshal, Arch-Chamberlain, Arch-High-Steward, Arch-Cupbearer, Arch-Chancellor: hereditary dignitaries who will add to all their other dignities the special privilege of electing the Emperor. But in the political theory of the Middle Ages State necessarily implies Church; the Arch-Chancellor is also Arch-Bishop; in the one capacity he has humbly received, in the other he imperiously demands, hush money for the Church in consideration of the sorcery by which the Emperor's victory has been won. Each concession brings a further demand, until at last "the total income of the land forever" is mulcted with tithes and levies for the maintenance of the Church. But even this is not enough, for there is the hypothetical land to be created by the enterprise of Faust: true, the land is not yet in existence, but patience is one of the Christian virtues,

and the Church will know how to wait when the Emperor's word has secured its rights of trover.

We are engaged, let it be remembered, with that element of the general Faust Story which makes the temptation of Faust to be the presentation to him of the whole world. This, in the version of Goethe, has the modification of the wager in heaven, that in no part of the world as presented by Mephistopheles will Faust rest satisfied. Faust had yearned for the ideal beauty of Helen, but Helen has vanished out of his grasp. In the idea of beneficent enterprise Faust has seen a field in which to look for satisfaction, but the enterprise must be prosecuted to its attainment before it can be seen whether the satisfaction will be secured. In the four Acts so far reviewed, the Great World has been kept entirely separate from the world of the Individual life which had been the subject of the First Part of the poem. In Act V the two worlds come into collision. First, from other individual lives disturbances come to the world enterprise that is being prosecuted. The personal obstinacy of a Baucis and Philemon can mar the perfection of Faust's great scheme, and the story of Naboth's Vineyard is duplicated. Large enterprises must be carried on by the agencies of others, and the corruptness of these agents —the piratical commerce of Mephistopheles' followers — disturbs the conscience of Faust. Again, his own personal life comes in as a disturbing force: he feels how his has been a haunted life, ever since he cursed the common ideals of mankind, and embraced the magic which is illegitimate power. But there is a disturbing

force far more serious than all these. The magic that could restore to Faust the youth he had lost cannot avail to free a mortal being from his mortality: old age is creeping upon our hero as the grand enterprise is being worked out, and from the opening of the fifth Act it is clear that the inevitable end is not far off. No magic can secure against Care. The first assault of Care is repelled by Faust: his life has indeed quietened down from stormy to discreet, yet is ever moving onward. The second assault of Care smites Faust with blindness: Faust is only roused to new energy, to complete the great work before it is too late. In his blindness he cannot catch the irony by which the fresh workmen summoned by Mephistopheles are digging, not the great trench, but Faust's own grave. Faust is eager with the idea that, though he may not himself attain the goal of his great enterprise, yet he may still — by removing the obstacle of the poisonous marsh — secure it for attainment by the labor of others. He suddenly catches the thought that this substitute is a higher thing than the original idea: —

> Yes! to this thought I hold with firm persistence;
> The last result of wisdom stamps it true:
> He only earns his freedom and existence,
> Who daily conquers them anew.

Not attainment, but unceasing endeavor: this is the *summum bonum* of existence, to which Faust will commit himself as his supreme satisfaction. But he has reached his supreme truth at the precise moment which fate has made the moment of his mortality: as he speaks the word he falls a corpse. When he first

entered into compact with Mephistopheles, Faust wished his first moment of satisfaction to be his last: —

> Then let the death-bell chime the token,
> Then art thou from thy service free!
> The clock may stop, the hand be broken,
> Then Time be finished unto me!

His words seem now to be echoed by those who stand around his dead body.

> *Mephistopheles.* Time is lord, on earth the old man lies.
> The clock stands still —
> *Chorus.* Stands still! silent as midnight, now!
> The index falls.
> *Mephistopheles.* It falls; and it is finished, here!
> *Chorus.* 'Tis past!

The wager made with Mephistopheles seems to have been lost by Faust, for in his last thought of unceasing aspiration he has reached a moment of satisfaction. But the wager made in heaven has been lost by Mephistopheles: the sole satisfaction acknowledged by Faust has been eternal dissatisfaction.

All this detailed exposition has seemed necessary in order to do justice to this part of our subject. The triple formula of the Faust Story applies, we have seen, to all versions alike; yet the different versions, each for itself, put their own interpretations upon the separate terms of the formula. The conception of the "whole world," so simple in the earlier versions, becomes a thing of immense fulness and complexity in the version which is the product of nineteenth-century culture; for

what indeed is the function of culture but to give fulness and richness to our conception of the world? It will be different with the third element of the formula, that which is concerned with the saving or the loss of the soul. The prologue to Goethe's version has had the effect of throwing this question into the background; what the discussion in heaven has brought to the front is a kindred, yet different, question — the inquiry what will constitute spiritual satisfaction to a soul inherently so noble as the soul of Faust. Yet the problem of salvation, and what may be the opposite of salvation, is by no means eliminated from Goethe's version. We may indeed forget this issue during the greater part of the action. But the two final scenes of the Second Part constitute in reality an Epilogue to the poem as a whole; this Epilogue draws to a focus the suggestions of the whole poem on the question in what the salvation of a soul shall consist.

From the opening moment of the action Faust appears a sinner; for he is seen betaking himself to magic, which is the conventional symbol in the drama for illegitimate knowledge and power. And this sin of magic — if it be a sin — is maintained from the first moment to the last; Mephistopheles enters into the action only as a more potent magician, who has power to present for Faust's acceptance the whole world. Yet the motive which has led to this sin is nothing but the unquenchable aspiration after truth. Nothing Mephistopheles offers can satisfy this aspiration; it maintains itself up to the last moment but one, and the only change which the moment of death brings

is that the aspiration itself seems to Faust higher than that to which he had aspired. Again: in the love episode, by the manipulation of Mephistopheles, Faust is brought to a single moment of distraction, in which he suddenly surrenders to gross passion that brings spiritual ruin to lover and loved alike. Yet before the curtain falls on the First Part, a voice from heaven proclaims Margaret saved; and her cry to her lover seems to invite him to share in her salvation. So far as the action of the poem goes, there is nothing more than this that bears on the question of the salvation or loss of souls.

But the final two scenes, though not so denominated by the poet, in reality constitute an Epilogue to the whole poem; and these carry the problem of Faust's salvation into the region beyond the grave. Both scenes take the form of Mysteries, in the mediæval sense of the term. The first might well be called the Mystery of Demons: in the full spirit of mediæval drama it presents demons, summoned by Mephistopheles, struggling for the soul of Faust, but driven away with celestial roses flung by the Chorus of rescuing Angels. This scene however gives us the end, not of Faust, but of Mephistopheles: it is his final outburst of humorous diablerie before he quits the rôle of tempter, which has proved a failure in his hands. That which follows may be called the Mystery of Love, and the word LOVE rings through it from beginning to end.

The Mystic Chorus with which it opens describes the scene: it might seem some Holy Mountain of

Isaiah's vision, in which the beasts forget their fierceness, and LOVE reigns throughout. With an echo of Spanish devotion it is also a Mountain of Anchorites, who, in their several stations, symbolize varied states of the meditative life. First, the Anchorite of Ecstasy sings how the storm of ecstasy purifies the soul, and the Star of LOVE can shine out. Then the Anchorite of Contemplation surveys all the nature scenes around as so many processes of LOVE. The third speaker introduces an idea strange to most readers, one borrowed from the speculations of Swedenborg. What future is there for the souls of Infants, who have died too young for the sin that might blast them, too young also for the development of faculties with which they might appreciate heaven? The idea is of some mystic intercommunication between these and the souls of adults, who, as it were, lend to the infant souls the faculties with which they may understand the universe they have never beheld. The third speaker is the Anchorite of this Seraphic Service: as the infant souls float past him on the mountain he incorporates them for the moment into himself, and through his eyes they look out upon the world. But they find this world too gloomy; and he dismisses them to a revelation of LOVE as they ascend.

It is at this point that the Angels enter, bearing the soul of Faust: from their words we learn the scheme of redemption. By his unconquerable aspiration after truth the soul of Faust, however sullied by magic and passion in this world, has been preserved for redemption beyond the grave.

Whoe'er aspires unweariedly
Is not beyond redeeming.
And if he feels the grace of Love
That from on high is given,
The Blessed Hosts, that wait above,
Shall welcome him to heaven!

Yet the Angels feel the heavy weight of the soul they are bearing, in which elements of the earthy have become incorporated.

When every element
The mind's high forces
Have seized, subdued, and blent,
No Angel divorces
Twin-natures single grown,
That inly mate them:
Eternal Love alone
Can separate them.

The Infant souls come floating by; the mystic incorporation takes place between these and the soul of Faust. He gains from them the innocence of celestial infancy, and the earthflakes that have clung to him are dissipated. What they gain from him is the faculties that can take in the universe, and the power of growth.

With mighty limbs he towers
Already above us;
He, for this love of ours,
Will richlier love us.
Early were we removed,
Ere life could reach us;
Yet he hath learned and proved,
And he will teach us.

Now a fourth speaker of the Mystery introduces us to a higher region. It is the Doctor of the Blessed Mary, his life dedicated to the mystery of the Virgin-Mother, in which mediæval theology saw the meeting-point of love and purity. Through his powers of vision we see the Mother All-glorious floating on high, and hear around her the Litany of Penitence from women — Margaret amongst them — who have sinned and who also have loved. To this region the soul of Faust approaches: already from celestial infancy he has reached celestial youth, yet is still dazed with the light of this new being. Margaret asks and obtains the boon of guiding Faust in this higher region by the strength of the bond that draws him towards her.

Into this region of celestial love the action of the poem may not follow. But the Mystic Chorus concludes the Epilogue and makes the thought complete. Here however, as elsewhere, obscurity has been caused by attempts at too literal translation. Compound words, and other forms of poetic compression, that are beauties in German, are foreign to the genius of the English language. It is vain to translate the key-word *Ewigweibliche* by *Ever-feminine*, or *Woman-soul*. Such literalisms strike a false note of interpretation: the stress is not on feminine as distinguished from masculine, on woman as distinguished from man, but upon the linking of the two, upon the mutuality of the sexes, if such an expression might be permitted. For the spirit of this Epilogue Margaret is not more necessary to Faust than Faust is to Margaret. It is only by free paraphrase that this Mystic Chorus will yield its thought.

This transitory world is but a symbol:
  THERE is the thing symbolized.
What here is mystic, indescribable,
  THERE is a thing achieved.
The LOVE that links man and woman is a thing eternal,
  Drawing us upward to this goal.

Faust by quenchless aspiration for truth has been led to sin; in his passionate love he has slipped into spiritual folly. But his aspiration has kept his soul alive for redemption beyond death; the love of Margaret has all the while been leading him to a region of celestial love in which the redemption will be complete.

V

This chapter has already run to inordinate length; its length would have to be doubled if full justice were to be done to the *Festus* of Philip Bailey. This is indeed one of the strange things of the literary world. In powers of poetic execution Bailey appears to be a poet of front rank; to every difficulty of philosophic thought, to every demand of imaginative setting, he is always adequate. And yet he seems almost unreadable: most of us have had with this book the experience of reaching with the eye the bottom of a page and then realizing that the brain has taken nothing in. The explanation seems to be a lack in this poet of any sense of proportion. It suggests that there is such a thing as poetic intemperance; even Pegasus needs the rein, but Bailey can never resist the creative impulse; not the main thought only, but every detail, and each detail of that detail, is fitted with simile and poetic enlargement, until outline is lost

in general dazzle. To difficulties springing from this splendid obscurity of poetic style are to be added difficulties of subject-matter and literary form. The poem is the product of modern speculative mysticism, giving creative form to a mass of theological, ontological, astrological thinking, on a basis of traditional orthodoxy. The literary form resembles the Rhapsodic Drama of the Bible: scenic elements extending to the whole universe, and dialogue supplemented by episodic disquisitions, which — dialogue only in form — may run to a thousand lines in length. We are however concerned with the poem only as one of the Faust stories: its variations of the type are interesting, and admit of brief statement.[1]

The most notable distinction of this version is that its hero is not an individual but a type. Festus is the "last man," as Adam was the first man; he is identified with the conclusion of human history as Adam with its commencement. The fall and rise of Festus is thus implicated with the destruction of earth and the end of time. We may think of the poem as combining the two great literary stories of temptation, the *Paradise Lost* and the Faust Story; Milton's poem opens with the Fall of Satan, Bailey's concludes with the Rise of Lucifer. This combination specially affects the agent of temptation. Lucifer is essentially the Satan of Milton, colored in manner with the Mephistopheles of Goethe. Again: all the Faust stories involve traditional bib-

[1] The reader must be careful to secure the final version of *Festus*, (Routledge & Sons, 1903): this differs fundamentally both in matter and form from earlier versions.

lical theology, but that traditional theology has its different schools; there is especially the difference between those that rest on free will and those that deny it. This version of Faust, unlike the rest, assumes the Doctrine of Election. Festus is the last man in the sense that he is necessary to make up the number of the elect. The denial of free will carries with it the omnipotence of Divine grace.

> He sole hath full free will whose will is fate. . . .
> Free will is but necessity in play,
> The clattering of the golden reins which guide
> The thunderfooted coursers of the sun.

This must necessarily affect the whole conception of evil in the world.

> Evil and good are God's right hand and left.

All things having emanated from God, and being destined to return to God, evil becomes in things an accident attaching to the degree of separation from the source: —

> For spirit is refracted in the flesh,
> And shows as crooked what is straightness' self.

Lucifer himself is but the shadow the whole creation casts from God's own light. Such a conception of evil must altogether alter the significance of temptation. In this poem we can have no barter of the soul's future for the world's present.

> *Lucifer.* With those whom Death hath drawn I meddle not. . . .
> *Festus.* Am I tempted thus
> Unto my fall?

Lucifer. God wills or lets it be.
How thinkest thou?
Festus. That I will go with thee.
Lucifer. From God I come.
Festus. I do believe thee, spirit.
He will not let thee harm me. Him I love,
And thee I fear not.

There is indeed an incident parallel to the wager in heaven of Goethe's version; but the philosophy of Bailey's poem takes the point out of this.

God. He is thine
To tempt. Him richen with what gifts thou wilt,
What might, what faculty. He'll still own grace
Not thine. Upon his soul no absolute power
Hast thou. All souls be mine; and mine for aye.

As with the Temptation of Christ in the wilderness, all the tempter can do is to make display of the world to test its effect upon the tempted.

But what is the "world" so displayed? We saw the immense content put upon this term by the version of Goethe; yet even this is bounded by this earth of ours and all that it contains. The world of Bailey's poem extends to the whole universe, a universe enlarged by the astrological speculations of mysticism. The journey of Festus and Lucifer takes them over the surface of our globe and all its countries and peoples; into the mysteries of its interior; through interstellar space, through all the worlds that are scattered through space. And all these enter into the scheme of the poem. Not only are there guardian angels of individuals, but each world has its guardian angel, and is the abode of kindred spirits who

once belonged to earth. More than this: a vein of ontological speculation suggests the worlds themselves as having a being of their own.

> Oh! I have seen
> World questioned, comforting world, yes, seen them weep
> Each other, if but for one red hour eclipsed;
> Or, as when, but now, Jove's giant orb, obscured
> By blood-wet clouds, dread proof of deadly strife
> In his breast, disruptive, if subdued; unmoved
> His sun-sired kin look on him, and pass by;
> Earth only pitiful of the idol sphere,
> Sore struggling with his foes, herself unfree
> From violent ill-wishers, waves many a mist,
> Anxious upon her mountain crests, in sign
> Of astral sympathy.[1]

The great bulk of the poem is filled out with what belongs to such astral speculations. What the tempter then has to offer to Festus is knowledge of the whole universe so enlarged, with power over the human world exercised for the good of mankind.

The poem has underplots. The Student — in whom perhaps we have an echo of Goethe's Wagner — and Helen seem to illustrate seekers after truth of a different type from Festus, the Student animated by ambition to serve, Helen, (apparently) only by curiosity. A notable episode of the poem is the "Occult Adventure," in which these two perish, while Festus survives. But the greatest episode is that which has the boldness to present Lucifer in love. In human form, with the weird beauty that is appropriate to a fallen star, he has drawn the love

[1] *Festus*, Canto I, page 30.

of the maiden Elissa. Lucifer is using this Elissa as a bait in his scheme of temptation; he intrusts her to the safe-keeping of his comrade Festus, fully designing that Festus shall be overpowered by her charms and betray his trust. As regards Festus, the plot succeeds: this fall of Festus into ignoble passion must be followed by agonies of remorse, and the taste of Hell's purgatorial cleansing, before he can recover his position. But Lucifer, with dread amazement, finds himself caught in the irresistible net of love. And this is the first note of the change that is to bring about his own redemption.

Farewell, ye angels; look your last on me.
I tempt no more. I am tempted; but of good.

He knows not that this is part of the whole Divine scheme of the world's salvation: —

That, as by angel man through woman fell,
Through her, shall this first-fallen again too rise;
All life in ultimate perfection linked
By him who oft-times chooses meanest means
To compass world-vast purposes.

Divine grace being omnipotent, Lucifer cannot resist it; evil being but an intermediate stage, he who fell as highest of angels becomes highest of angels in his restoration.

Then highest, humblest I, eternal Lord!
Of all thou hast made, shall be; and by thy word
All recreative, renewed, transformed. I feel
The essential in me trembling, like to ice spears
Feeling their way 'neath star-frost o'er a lake.

The goal of the poem is thus reached. Lucifer and Festus alike are swept into the current of universal salva-

tion. From God all things had proceeded; evil, individual wills, had been but transient phenomena; into God all things return.

World without end, and I am God alone.
The aye, the infinite, the whole, the One.
I only was; nor matter else, nor mind;
The self-contained Perfection unconfined.
I only am; in might and mercy one;
I live in all things, and am closed in none.
I only shall be; when the worlds have done,
My boundless Being will be but begun.

CHAPTER VI

COLLATERAL STUDIES IN WORLD LITERATURE

IN the Introduction to this work, on page 52, an attempt has been made to offer a chart for the Literary Pedigree of the English-speaking peoples, that might serve, so to speak, as a map of World Literature on the English projection. If the reader will cast his eye on this chart, and compare it with the content of the five preceding chapters, he will see that what the chart connects with the three main factors of our literature has been largely covered by what we have called the five Literary Bibles. One of them gives the Hebraic factor in its completeness; a second is a less complete representation of Hellenic literature. The other three bibles belong to stages where the third factor of Romance has come into play. Shakespeare represents romantic material touched by Hellenic influence; in Milton's work we have a perfect balancing of Hellenic and Hebraic; Dante gives us mediævalism in its wholeness. The fifth of our literary bibles presents what is a mediæval germ undergoing successive modifications under influences which have extended from the establishment of romance to the present time. But if we survey our literary map apart from the three main factors in our pedigree, the other civilizations represented seem to

have no connection with the important works we have called literary bibles, except indeed a very indirect connection in the fact that most of them have — as the dotted lines in the chart indicate — sent out streams of influence towards the great literary complex of mediævalism and romance. The present chapter will supplement those that have preceded, by considering elements of our literature that have been contributed by civilizations holding to ourselves not direct but collateral relation.

Here, however, a distinction must be emphasized which belongs to this work as a whole. This is not in any way a treatise on Universal Literature. Such universal literature would have to deal with the civilizations represented in our map each separately, and give adequate account of its literary achievement. I do not wish to underestimate the study of Universal Literature in itself; but I do say that, when the question is of culture and education, we need to be on our guard. Universal Literature, if treated on a small scale, can hardly be other than mere information. Now, in cultural studies few things are more barren than literary facts and information; few things have done more to depress literature in the circle of studies than the text-books often offered, which are made up of names of authors, notices of their careers, lists of their works, with one or two of these works briefly described and estimated. The last seems a particular aggravation: of what possible use can it be to a much-suffering student to know that such and such a book, which he is never to read, made a good or bad impression on such and such an author, whom he does

not know? It is of course different with the treatment of Universal Literature on a larger scale, where a whole volume can be assigned to each literature, with the connectedness of a specialist's review; works of this kind are indispensable for the study of history and the larger study of literature.[1] But the purpose of the present work is entirely different from this. We are concerned, not with the totality of literature, but with its unity; and our fundamental position is that, at all events in cultural studies, this unity of literature must be found by the modifying influence of perspective and a given point of view. We have in this work no responsibility for the literary output of particular peoples. We are concerned with *our own* literature: the *our* is that of the English-speaking peoples, and the *our own* is to be estimated, not on the narrow basis of native production, or even expression in the English tongue. Whatever of universal literature, coming from whatever source, has been appropriated by our English civilization, and made a part of our English culture, that is to us World Literature. This chapter, then, deals with the contributions of collateral civilizations to our world classics.

I

It has been remarked previously that among the Semitic civilizations the Hebrew was not the first to lead. Yet Babylonian, Assyrian, Egyptian literatures, how-

[1] I may instance as typical of such treatment the series *Literatures of the World* edited by Gosse (Appleton) and the series *Periods of European Literature* edited by Professor Saintsbury (Scribner).

ever interesting for other reasons, enter into our world literature only indirectly; whatever was best in these civilizations was absorbed by the Hebrew, and by its vitalizing power diffused through the world. It is otherwise with Arabic: this has played a very individual part in history, and one which has closely touched ourselves. A world religion of Arabic origin was the rival through the Middle Ages of Christianity; as Latin was the literary tongue of mediæval Europe, so Arabic was the organ of expression to Indian, Greek, and all other peoples who made up Islam. And between Christian and Saracenic civilizations there was continual interaction. Besides being one of the contributory elements of mediævalism, Arabic literature has given us two of our world classics: these are — and the conjunction is curious — the *Koran* and *The Arabian Nights Entertainments*.

The *Koran* is of course the Bible of the millions who make the Mohammedan world. Unlike our Bible, which is a miscellaneous literature, the *Koran* consists only of revelations made to Mahomet himself. Its superficial appearance is very peculiar. The revelations were written down for preservation at haphazard during the prophet's lifetime, and brought into a collection only after his death. The basis of order in this collection was the singular basis of length: the brief oracles of the early career of Mahomet come last, the long surahs, marking the time when he is accepted for lawgiver as well as prophet, are at the beginning. Thus the *Koran* is the one book in the world which has to be read backwards.

Of the earlier oracles let us take first one of the very briefest, that entitled *Of the Smiting*.[1]

In the name of the merciful and compassionate God.
The smiting!
What is the smiting?
And what shall make thee know what the smiting is?
The day when men shall be like scattered moths; and the mountains shall be like flocks of carded wool!
And as for him whose balance is heavy, he shall be in a well-pleasing life.
But as for him whose balance is light, his dwelling shall be the pit of hell.
And who shall make thee know what it is? — a burning fire!

Add to this one somewhat more extended, yet still early.

In the name of the merciful and compassionate God.
Has there come to thee the story of the overwhelming?
Faces on that day shall be humble, labouring, toiling, — shall broil upon a burning fire; shall be given to drink from a boiling spring! no food shall they have save from the foul thorn, which shall not fatten nor avail against hunger!
Faces on that day shall be comfortable, content with their past endeavours, — in a lofty garden wherein they shall hear no foolish word; wherein is a flowing fountain; wherein are couches raised on high, and goblets set down, and cushions arranged, and carpets spread!
Do they not look then at the camel how she is created?
And at the heaven how it is reared?
And at the mountains how they are set up?
And at the earth how it is spread out?

[1] The quotations are from Professor Palmer's translation (sometimes slightly altered).

But remind: thou art only one to remind; thou art not in authority over them; except such as turns his back and misbelieves, for him will God torment with the greatest torment.
Verily, unto us is their return, and, verily, for us is their account!

We notice the brevity of these, the exclamatory disconnected sentences, the preoccupation with the one topic of the judgment to come. To the Oriental mind incoherence is the sign of prophecy, as to the early Greek madness was inspiration. Moreover, in this the Mecca stage of his life Mahomet is occupied with the sanctions of the new religion rather than its content; he is "one to remind," not yet endowed with the authority that will make him the source of doctrine and law. It is otherwise with the Medina prophecies. These are long, and full of positive matter; in addition to descriptions of heaven and hell we now find inspired rulings and laws, declarations of the unity of God, assertions of Mahomet's apostolic position, recognition of other apostles, especially Moses and Jesus, legends and references to the history of Israel. Thus the surah which stands first (after the introductory prayer) covers forty-four octavo pages; besides warnings and promises it includes legends of Adam and of the history of Israel; detailed regulations — like the ordinances of Mosaic law — on fasting, on alms, on pilgrimages, on the use of wine, on women, on oaths, on family life, on usury and debt. But the incoherence of prophecy is maintained by the total absence of order or plan; the different topics succeed one another with an indiscriminateness which breathes the spirit of spontaneity. And this gives opportunity for the sudden

outbursts of exalted thought, which are a distinguishing feature of the *Koran*. Thus, in this second surah:—

God's is the east and the west, and wherever ye turn there is God's face.

Righteousness is not that ye turn your faces towards the east or the west, but righteousness is, one who believes in God, and the last day, and the angels, and the Book, and the prophets, and who gives wealth for His love to kindred, and orphans, and the poor, and the son of the road, and beggars, and those in captivity; and who is steadfast in prayer, and gives alms; and those who are sure of their covenant when they make a covenant; and the patient in poverty, and distress, and in time of violence: these are they who are true, and these are those who fear.

Or there is the "verse of the throne," often found inscribed in mosques:—

God, there is no god but He, the living, the self-subsistent. Slumber takes Him not, nor sleep. His is what is in the heavens and what is in the earth. Who is it that intercedes with Him save by His permission? He knows what is before them and what behind them, and they comprehend not aught of His knowledge but of what He pleases. His throne extends over the heavens and the earth, and it tires Him not to guard them both, for He is high and grand.

We may add the believer's prayer, with which this surah concludes:—

We hear and obey, Thy pardon, O Lord! for to Thee our journey tends. God will not require of the soul save its capacity. It shall have what it has earned, and it shall owe what has been earned from it. Lord, catch us not up, if we forget or make mistake; Lord, load us not with a burden, as Thou hast loaded those who were before us. Lord, make us not to carry what we have not strength for, but forgive us, and pardon us, and have mercy on us. Thou art our Sovereign, then help us against the people who do not believe!

In literary form, the *Koran* presents some features of interest. The original is prose, running in lengths that end in common rhymes: these rhymes however appear to be a linguistic rather than a literary peculiarity; they are bound up with the nature of Arabic roots, and will not admit of translation. Besides this there is obviously the rhythm of parallelism, as in the Hebrew Bible; but the parallelism is not carried to the extent that admits of systematization, it is only such sentence structure as belongs to oratory in all languages. Occasionally we have more defined rhythmic forms. Perhaps the most pronounced case is in the fifty-fifth surah, which is an example of the running refrain. This is a very early poetic form: the great example of it in the Bible is the hundred and thirty-sixth psalm, which is clearly a song of the wilderness. It is characteristic of this form, that not only does the refrain persist — like a *basso ostinato* in music — but it delights to interrupt the grammatical structure of the sentences. Thus in the psalm we have: —

To him which smote great kings,
    (*For his mercy endureth for ever*)
And slew famous kings:
    (*For his mercy endureth for ever*)
Sihon king of the Amorites,
    (*For his mercy endureth for ever*)
And Og king of Bashan;
    (*For his mercy endureth for ever*)
And gave their land for an heritage,
    (*For his mercy endureth for ever*)
Even an heritage unto Israel his servant.
    (*For his mercy endureth for ever.*)

This is markedly the case with the example in the *Koran*. The surah as a whole is an appeal to men and ginns — ginns are the genii of the *Arabian Nights* — men created out of clay, and spirits out of fire; these are *ye twain* of the refrain. The bounties of creation are recited, and the surah proceeds: —

O assembly of ginns and mankind! if ye are able to pass through the confines of heaven and earth then pass through them! — ye cannot pass through save by authority!
(*Then which of your Lord's bounties will ye twain deny?*)
There shall be sent against you a flash of fire, and molten copper, and ye shall not be helped!
(*Then which of your Lord's bounties will ye twain deny?*)
And when the heaven is rent asunder and become rosy red, melting like grease,
(*Then which of your Lord's bounties will ye twain deny?*)
On that day neither man nor ginn shall be asked about his crime:
(*Then which of your Lord's bounties will ye twain deny?*)
The sinners shall be known by their marks, and shall be seized by the forelock and the feet!
(*Then which of your Lord's bounties will ye twain deny?*)
"This is hell, which the sinners did call a lie! they shall circulate between it and water boiling quite!"
(*Then which of your Lord's bounties will ye twain deny?*)
But for him who fears the station of his Lord are gardens twain:
(*Then which of your Lord's bounties will ye twain deny?*)
Both furnished with branching trees;
(*Then which of your Lord's bounties will ye twain deny?*)
In each are flowing springs;
(*Then which of your Lord's bounties will ye twain deny?*)
In each are of every fruit two kinds.
(*Then which of your Lord's bounties will ye twain deny?*)
Reclining on beds the linings of which are of brocade, and the fruit of the two gardens within reach to cull,
(*Then which of your Lord's bounties will ye twain deny?*)

Therein are maids of modest glances whom none has loved before,
    (*Then which of your Lord's bounties will ye twain deny?*)
As though they were rubies and pearls.
    (*Then which of your Lord's bounties will ye twain deny?*)
Is the reward of goodness aught but goodness?
    (*Then which of your Lord's bounties will ye twain deny?*)

With similar provisions of bliss for inferior inhabitants of Paradise the surah continues, the refrain persisting to the close. It is interesting to find so accentuated a rhythmic device in a work of which the main note is spontaneity; and this throws light upon the claim of the running refrain to be a transition stage between the fixed folk song and individualized compositions.

Unquestionably the *Arabian Nights Entertainments* is a world classic. It takes us in a moment into the very heart of the Middle Ages. This era conceives of only two regions, our own and the enemy's, Christianity and Islam. The enmity is consistent with the respect born of conflict; nor is it all conflict, for Saracen life has penetrated far into Europe, and brought its poetry, science, and art. Now, the *Arabian Nights* gives the English reader mediævalism seen from the farther side. It is an intellectual holiday tour to be separated from our own responsible life, and immersed for a time in bright Orientalism. Instead of London or Paris or Rome we have Bagdad, Damascus, Bussorah, Harran, Cairo, Tripoli; we turn from Persia to China, India, Africa, and generally are aware of an empire extending from farthest east to farthest west. Instead of feudal struggles we realize autocracy, as absolute as a child's idea of power. If a sultan

hears from a fair lady that she was jostled in the street by a passing porter, he simply orders all the porters of the city to be hanged, that the unknown offender may not escape; the massacre is averted only by the lady's consciousness that she has been fibbing. The cares of government by day are refreshed by the nightly stroll in disguise to see what the subjects think of it; if there is criticism, the critic may be awakened from a drugged sleep to find himself autocrat for a day amid bending courtiers, and to experiment with his notions of government. Slavery is in evidence, but presents itself chiefly as an era in an adventurous life. The lower orders — tailors, bakers of pastry, especially porters — can always be had to give realism to scenes. But business on a larger scale seems chiefly to be travelling in sociable caravans through distant countries, with consciousness of immensely valuable baggage, and good prospect, where the retail trade begins, of love intrigues with veiled customers. If there is travel on a larger scale than this, it seems to be through regions of Bacon's "unnatural natural philosophy," or Pliny's book of nature prodigies. Beauties of nature are lavished on all scenes, and woman is more beautiful still. Wealth in money or precious jewellery seems boundless, for there is the bank of magic to draw upon; and this is not the ponderous magic of the Faust Story, inviting explanation, but seems simply the less usual side of nature. If man has been created out of stolid earth, with the spirit of God breathed into him, why not genii out of volatile and overmastering fire, with no divine element to restrain them? The whole moral atmosphere is

as neutral as that of a dream; and the only providence is the eternal fitness of things to make story.

The title *Arabian Nights* only reminds us that Arabic was the Latin of the Moslem world: into this medium stories which had migrated from Indian, Persian, Turkish, Hebrew, Greek literature must translate themselves if they are to gain a hearing. Thus this book, more perhaps than any other, brings us in touch with floating literature; with the processes of evolution which built up romance; with the Middle Ages as a gathering ground of world literature. It has thus great interest for the student of literary form. What we call a story is a form of creative literature, however hard it may be to define it. When, however, many stories are aggregated together, further literary forms are required as a basis of arrangement. The most conspicuous device is that of the frame: the story used to introduce all the succeeding stories, enclosing them as a frame encloses a picture. We have this in European collections of stories: Boccaccio gives us for a frame the plague in Florence, and flight of elegant ladies and gentlemen to villas where they entertain themselves with telling the tales that are to make up the *Decameron;* Chaucer's frame story is a pilgrimage to Canterbury, the pilgrims telling stories by the way. The frame story of the *Arabian Nights* is the characteristic suggestion of a jealous sultan, who marries a queen each day only to have her executed on the morrow; but one of these queens, Scheherezade, interferes with the regularity of the arrangement by telling stories and stopping at the interesting parts, so that the execu-

tion has to be postponed day after day, until, at the end of a thousand and one nights, it is not worth while. But in the present case this device of the frame story is, so to speak, raised to a higher power. Not only do we have the frame story introducing other stories, but each of these other stories may be a frame to enclose yet others: this is the plot interest of involution, story within story, and story within story, like Chinese boxes, to any degree of remoteness from the starting-point. Involution in this sense belongs to other Oriental collections, such as the *Fables of Bidpai;* but in the *Arabian Nights* the involution is perfectly carried through; all the dropped threads are regularly recovered, and the whole brought into symmetry.

It is worth while to illustrate. Among the stories Scheherezade tells is that of the Hunchback, in whose death were apparently implicated an orthodox Tailor, a Jewish Physician, a Mussulman Purveyor, and a Christian Merchant. When the four, with the body of the Hunchback, are brought before the sultan, he exclaims that this is the most extraordinary tangle of affairs he has ever known. The Christian Merchant asks permission to relate a still more extraordinary story; but what he offers is so inadequate that the sultan is about to have all four prisoners hanged; only that the Mussulman Purveyor claims his privilege of trying to produce a more extraordinary story than that of the Hunchback, and so in turn the Jewish Physician and the Tailor. Each of the tales so told introduces yet another tale: the first, that of a Handless Man; the second, that of a Thumbless Man; the

Physician's, that of a Mutilated Patient. But the Tailor's story acts as frame for two others; for he tells how a Lame Guest at a wedding left rather than sit down with another guest he denounced as a Chattering Barber: if the Lame Guest has been allowed to tell his story, so in equity must the Barber tell his. This Barber relates an adventure amply proving that he is the most silent of men; yet he admits that he comes of a family of chatterers, and — before he can be stopped — gives in succession the story of his first brother (who was a hunchback), of his second brother (who was toothless), of his third brother (who was blind), of his fourth brother (who was one-eyed), of his fifth brother (who had no ears), and of his sixth brother (who was hare-lipped). Only when these six subordinate stories have been reeled off does the Barber bring his own story to a conclusion. But this Barber's story, it will be remembered, was an item in the Tailor's story; and the Tailor's story can now be completed. We are back now in the Story of the Hunchback; and the sultan who has listened to all this involution of narratives picks out — as the reader will do likewise — the Chattering Barber as the most striking point. It seems that the said Barber is in this very city of the sultan, and can be sent for. Instead of answering to the description of chatterer, the Barber insists on having the surrounding circumstances explained to him. All the tangle of the Hunchback's death is related to him. Then comes a surprise: by his art — for barbers are also surgeons — he has perceived something strange in the body of the Hunchback; he draws out a fish-

INVOLUTION IN STORY FORM

Frame Story of Scheherezade
    Story of the Hunchback, and the Four implicated in his death
        Story (1) Of the Christian Merchant — containing
            Story of the Handless Man
        Story (2) Of the Mussulman Purveyor — containing
            Story of the Thumbless Man
        Story (3) of the Jewish Physician — containing
            Story of the Mutilated Patient
        Story (4) of the Tailor — containing
            Story of the Lame Guest
            Story of the Chattering Barber
                Of the Barber's first brother (hunchback)
                Of the Barber's second brother (toothless)
                Of the Barber's third brother (blind)
                Of the Barber's fourth brother (one-eyed)
                Of the Barber's fifth brother (no ears)
                Of the Barber's sixth brother (hare-lipped)
            Story of the Barber concluded
        Story of the Tailor concluded
    Story of the Hunchback concluded
Frame Story resumed

bone from the throat, and the Hunchback comes to life again. This Story of the Hunchback thus brought to a happy conclusion, we get back to the Frame Story of Scheherezade. When it is set out in graphic form, as on the preceding page, we can realize this symmetrical involution of story within story to the fifth degree, constructive framework to what, on the surface, seems only a farrago of drolleries. Such Oriental *tours de force* of plot construction are part of the forces preparing the way for the romantic drama of Shakespeare, that blends together its many stories, not with mechanical parallelism, but with delicate artistic and moral suggestiveness.[1]

II

The dominant position of Indian amongst the Aryan civilizations might lead us to expect that from this source there would come large contributions to our world literature. Yet such is not the case. The primacy of Indian civilization is mainly one of time. If we are studying the question of literary origins, then the influence of Vedic Hymns and Vedantic philosophy upon Hellenic poetry and philosophy is a subject of great importance. But it is only thus indirectly, passed through the alembic of Greek creative originality, that the Indian element has entered largely into world literature. So, again, to the student of literary phenomena Indian wisdom, Indian drama and lyric, especially the enormous epics of this

[1] This conception of Shakespearean plot is the basis of my *Shakespeare as a Dramatic Thinker;* compare pages 5–7, and Appendix.

literature, will be full of interest and suggestiveness. But this Oriental poetry, with all its literary values, does not readily assimilate with western taste. Or at least, the entrance of Indian into world literature is a question of the future rather than of the past and present. This brings me to a point of considerable interest to our whole subject, something I will express by the term "mediating interpretation." In a sense, every translator is an interpreter between one literature and another. But the current idea of translation has come down to us from the departmental study of literature; and this has naturally emphasized exact correspondence with the original as the first virtue of translation. From our point of view, departure from the original is an offence only when it is unintentional. We have a right to claim that our interpreters shall understand what they are interpreting to its smallest detail. But when the translator designedly departs from his model, and uses fresh creative power to effect a desirable modification, then we have a mediation between one literature and another which is more than translation. Such mediating interpretation has been applied with splendid success to Indian poetry by Sir Edwin Arnold; his versions — one of which will be noticed in a later chapter[1] — retain the essence of the Indian poem, yet with creative modification, both negative and positive, such as enables the foreign matter to appeal to the western taste. And mediating interpretation may go further than this. I instance such a work as Southey's

[1] See page 378.

Curse of Kehama, in my judgment a poem of high rank. There is no Indian original corresponding to this: it gives us the mediating interpretation applied, in a purely original poem, to the whole body of Indian mythology. Only when by modifying influences of this kind the Oriental matter has been brought within the range of western appreciation, will Indian enter largely into our world literature.

III

It is otherwise with Persian literature: from this quarter comes what at the present moment is perhaps the most universally recognized world classic — the *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam. Once more we have mediating interpretation; the vogue of the poem is perhaps as much due to Fitzgerald as to Omar. And he has used his license of creative modification freely; the most startling stanza of the English poem is apparently founded on a misreading, but in this case a misreading that proves worth while.

The poem, on the face of it, is a glorification of wine. Of course, the heresy of mystic interpretation has intervened, and asked us to consider the wine as something symbolic of the spiritual. Such interpretation is impossible: the wine of the Persian poem is simply the juice of the grape which all the world understands by that word. And yet two notes of wine poetry are conspicuously absent. There is no suggestion of excess, of the intoxicated abandon that inspires bacchanalian verse, and to a less extent anacreontics. Nor have we

the spirit of the connoisseur: there is no discriminating appreciation of fruity or full-bodied, only plain wine from beginning to end. Wine here is a means to an end. And the end is the accentuation of the consciousness that wine brings; the stimulus to the mood of brooding; the quickened sense of the present moment as the one unassailable certainty of life. Thus, paradoxical as it may seem, the full spirit of this wine poem can be maintained apart from wine. The soothing sense of an exalted present from which to brood on past and future, which one man gets from wine, another man will get from tobacco, another from the right blend of tea, or a cup of Turkish coffee; a man of yet another temperament will obtain it from a country ramble in company with his favorite dog. But, however produced, this outlook on life from a moment of elation is the spirit of the whole poem, and that which gives it its power and universal hold. For such realization of a conscious present is the very starting-point of all psychology and of the philosophy of existence; we have here the *cogito ergo sum* raised to the poetic plane; the brooding emphasis on present existence is the *pou stō* of certainty, from which whatever of life is phenomenal or matter of inference can be meditatively exalted or depressed.

The form of the poem is indicated by the title *Rubaiyat*, which signifies "epigrams." The epigrams have a fixed structure: each is a four-lined stanza in which the third line, by missing the common rhyme of the other three, gives to the flow of the stanza a lift like the crest of a wave. The epigrams (with scarcely

an exception) are complete in themselves; yet the thought can be carried on from one to another. The effect of the whole is thus something like that of the sonnet sequence; though the epigram is so much briefer than a sonnet, yet it has the same character of a mould into which thought must be fitted, and the relation of epigram to epigram is just that of sonnets in a sequence. Another point of poetic form to be noted is the concealed imagery of Day, which runs through the poem. The opening stanza coincides with the opening of Day; of New Year's Day, which to the Persian is the beginning of Spring; it coincides also with the opening of what is called the "Tavern." But the connotation of the English word breaks the effect; the Persian Tavern is a *Paradise* — this word is Persian — with suggestions of shady boughs and roses and Spring flowers, and of a "cypress-slender minister of wine" going her happy rounds among guests "star-scattered on the grass." Towards the conclusion the suggestion of evening rises out of the underlying imagery into the thought of the poem; then moonlight closes the Day and brings the time for departure. And among other beauties of poetic detail we have the translation of common thoughts into vinous language. Departed friends are those who —

> Have drunk their Cup a Round or two before,
> And one by one crept silently to rest.

Heaven is that inverted Bowl they call the Sky; when men reach their end Heaven inverts them to Earth like an empty Cup; the fleeting generations are the

Millions of Bubbles poured from his Bowl by the Eternal Saki; Death comes as the Angel of the darker Drink, whose Cup invites the Soul forth to the lips to quaff. And the trite image of the potter and his clay is expanded at one point to a parable, in which all men's varying views of God and judgment are moulded in terms of pottery: amongst them, the vessel of ungainly make is heard asking, "What! did the hand then of the Potter shake?" while a profound "Sufi pipkin" gets to the depths of all controversy with his question, "Who is the Potter, pray, and who the Pot?"

In beautiful monotony of strongly flowing verse, the mood of conscious brooding, with its unassailable certainty of the present moment, passes in review the inequalities and fluctuations of life. Iram and Jamshyd are gone, and the sweet singer David's lips are locked, but wine and nightingales and roses are for ever. The life of purpose, that must look to past and future: it is so much credit offered instead of the cash of the present; the great purpose, no more than snow lying on the dusty face of the desert before it melts; the life itself, a battered Caravanserai opening and closing its doors of Night and Day for a traveller's destined hour. The meaning of life? A mass of uncertainties, confronting the one certainty of the Present. Eager frequenters of Doctor and Saint evermore come out by the same door where they went in: their sole knowledge the two words *I came* and *I go*, with all the *why* and *whence* and *whither* insolently withheld. Tangled discussion of subjective and objective, ego and non-ego, is so much talk of *Me* and *Thee*, with the talking *Thee*

and *Me* about to perish. Or does pantheism or immanence offer a *Thee in Me* working behind the Veil? There comes a Voice as from Without: *The Me within Thee Blind.*

But the *I go* has brought another motive into the poem, and this is another certainty: DEATH. But to the exalted consciousness Death presents itself as another exalted consciousness — the Soul able to fling the Dust aside and ride naked on the Air of Heaven: beside this, Life looks a paltry thing, a tent for one day's rest on the journey, an oasis of Being for the phantom Caravan before it reaches the Nothing from which it set out. The thought sinks back to the impossibility of a meaning for life. Why spend the spangle of Existence on the great Secret, when a hair may divide the False and the True, when the Existence itself may be a drama which One behind the fold of Darkness Himself contrives, enacts, beholds?

But the motive surges up of God, of a Judgment. To the stimulated sense of the present moment the question is raised, Who but God created the Wine? Where is the certainty of Judgment, when of the myriads who have passed through the door of Darkness none have returned with tidings of the road? The revelations of Devout and Learned are stories which the Prophets awoke from sleep to tell their comrades and returned to sleep. What if men are but magic Shadow-shapes from the Lantern held by the Master of the Show; but helpless Pieces of the Game he plays. What if the message from the Invisible be that "I Myself am Heaven and Hell": —

Heav'n but the Vision of fulfilled Desire,
And Hell the Shadow from a Soul on fire,
Cast on the Darkness into which Ourselves,
So late emerged from, shall so soon expire.

But, apart from all judgment to come, the brooding consciousness must confront another thought — of moral consciousness, and the sense of sin. Yet, what becomes of sin, if all is predestined from first to last? Man has been no party to his own existence: the Creator alone must be responsible for the possibility of sin.

What! from his helpless Creature be repaid
Pure Gold for what he lent him dross-allay'd —
Sue for a Debt he never did contract,
And cannot answer — Oh the sorry trade!

And it is here we get the impressive thought created by the translator out of a slight misreading.[1]

Oh Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make,
And ev'n with Paradise devise the Snake:
For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
Is blacken'd — Man's forgiveness give — and take!

But a subtle sense of Day passing into Evening comes to throw the brooding consciousness into a reminiscent attitude. A life lost for Wine! Yet has it not been worth while?

I wonder often what the Vintners buy
One half so precious as the stuff they sell.

[1] See Professor Cowell's comment quoted in Aldis Wright's edition of *Fitzgerald's Letters and Literary Remains*, Volume III, page 386.

The sense of closing Day presses, and the conscious present becomes shot through with regrets, and with longings: —

> Yet Ah, that Spring should vanish with the Rose!
> That Youth's sweet-scented manuscript should close.
>
> Would but the Desert of the Fountain yield
> One glimpse — if dimly, yet indeed, revealed,
>   To which the fainting traveller might spring,
> As springs the trampled herbage of the field!

The rising Moon closes Day: the hour of strong consciousness must pass with the other hours. The Moon will be there to shed her beams on brooders of the future.

> And when like her, oh Saki, you shall pass
> Among the Guests Star-scatter'd on the Grass,
>   And in your joyous errand reach the spot
> Where I made One — turn down an empty Glass!

IV

When we approach the subject of the Celtic civilization, the points which first suggest themselves are such as do not really belong to the present discussion. It is for the study of literary origins to deal with the question of the influence exerted by the Celtic element on our English genius and in European literature. Again, we are just now at the beginning of a great Celtic revival, by which both taste and scholarship are being poured upon the remains of Gaelic literature, stored in manuscripts or little-read books; we look

forward to being able, at no distant date, to understand and appreciate Celtic literature as a whole — Welsh, Irish, Scotch; to estimate fairly the Celts as one of the Aryan families of peoples, and to realize the literary leadership of Ireland in its own age. Meanwhile, the one contribution of Celtic to world literature as it stands is the *Ossian* of Macpherson. This work has in recent times fallen into neglect; there has been reaction from the burst of admiration it once aroused, and it has sunk down into the mists of controversy amid which it first emerged.

This was a literary controversy in which more than the usual amount of nonsense was written; and in which, it may be said, the real issues were misunderstood by both sides. Macpherson had collected from the lips of aged Gaels poetry which had come down to them by long tradition; he freely pieced together and otherwise worked up the materials so obtained, and published them, not in the original, but in translation. He did his work at a most unfortunate moment. The England of Dr. Samuel Johnson's age had the most inveterate prejudice against everything Scotch; at that time, and for long afterwards, prejudice was a leading factor in literary criticism. It was moreover an era of the most highly artificial poetry, and an age incapable of understanding any type of poetry but its own. Accordingly, Macpherson's *Ossian* was received with a howl of disdain: it was pronounced an impudent forgery; the human memory, it was declared, could not possibly retain such an amount unassisted by writing; the age supposed to have produced the poems was an

age of barbarism; the details of the poems were palpable plagiarisms. It was in vain that Dr. Hugh Blair, as Edinburgh Professor of Belles-Lettres, refuted these charges; in vain that a committee of the Highland Society of Scotland, appointed for the purpose, made elaborate inquiries, and discovered a great body of original Gaelic poetry, just such as that from which Macpherson professed to draw his materials; in particular, in reference to what was a great point of the controversy, a passage alleged to be an obvious imitation of Milton's Address to the Sun, the Gaelic original was discovered and certified to have been taken down orally from an old man thirty years previously. All this side of the controversy rested solely upon the critical limitations of the period, which understood nothing but personal authorship, and thought of Homer as a man who had "written" the *Iliad;* what we now understand of floating literature, and the processes by which traditional material is worked up by some redactor into the poems of written literature, makes the work of Macpherson easily intelligible. On the other hand, his haughty silence assisted the difficulty; his work in free handling of his materials to give them poetic coherence is perfectly justifiable, but he equally owed literary history the duty of scrupulously preserving the Gaelic originals, fragmentary though they might be, as materials for linguistic and literary science to work upon. The literary taste of Europe however pierced through the mist of controversy, and seized upon the content of the book as an important addition to the world of literature, the poetry of a highly original people; a literary ruin, it

might be, but a ruin that was an artistic revelation. I desire no better statement of the whole case than one which comes from Matthew Arnold. —

> The Celts, with their vehement reaction against the despotism of fact, with their sensuous nature, their manifold striving, their adverse destiny, their immense calamities, the Celts are the prime authors of this vein of piercing regret and passion, — of this Titanism in poetry. A famous book, Macpherson's *Ossian*, carried in the last century this vein like a flood of lava through Europe. I am not going to criticise Macpherson's *Ossian* here. Make the part of what is forged, modern, tawdry, spurious, in the book, as large as you please; strip Scotland, if you like, of every feather of borrowed plumes which on the strength of Macpherson's *Ossian* she may have stolen from that *vetus et major Scotia*, the true home of the Ossianic poetry, Ireland; I make no objection. But there will still be left in the book a residue with the very soul of the Celtic genius in it, and which has the proud distinction of having brought this soul of the Celtic genius into contact with the genius of the nations of modern Europe, and enriched all our poetry by it. Woody Morven and echoing Sora, and Selma with its silent halls! — we all owe them a debt of gratitude, and when we are unjust enough to forget it, may the Muse forget us!

The great use of Macpherson's book is to read and re-read it until the reader is in tune with the atmosphere of the poetry. We have here an elementary civilization with the minimum of the artificial; it seems immersed in the gloom and power of external nature till it has become a part of it; this, with what Matthew Arnold calls the Titanic spirit, makes the distinctiveness of Ossianic poetry. It contrasts with Greek and Norse epic in the absence of artistic elaboration and poetic architecture. *Fingal* is the most considerable of the Ossianic epics. Here the plot is as simple as plot can be: war against

invaders of Ireland, with incessant defeat, until the supreme hero Fingal arrives in his ships, and defeat changes to victory, with reconciliation and rejoicings of peace. Structural skill appears in the way in which episodes are worked into the stages of this action, giving scope, not only for variety in war, but also for other motives — love, hunting, hospitality, visitations from the supernatural, the songs of bards. As the hosts are first mustered two notable chieftains are missing: this gives opportunity for the episode of Morna, the sad love story which unites the two heroes and their common love in a tragic death. The direct narrative resumes, and we have the clash of war.

Like autumn's dark storms pouring from two echoing hills, towards each other approached the heroes. Like two deep streams from high rocks meeting, mixing roaring on the plain; loud, rough, and dark in battle meet Lochlin and Inis-fail. Chief mixes his strokes with chief, and man with man: steel, clanging, sounds on steel. Helmets are cleft on high. Blood bursts and smokes around. Strings murmur on the polished yews. Darts rush along the sky. Spears fall like the circles of light, which gild the face of night: as the noise of the troubled ocean, when roll the waves on high. As the last peal of thunder in heaven, such is the din of war! Though Cormac's hundred bards were there to give the fight to song; feeble was the voice of a hundred bards to send the deaths to future times! . . . As roll a thousand waves to the rocks, so Swaran's host came on. As meets a rock a thousand waves, so Erin met Swaran of spears. Death raises all his voices around, and mixes with the sounds of shields. Each hero is a pillar of darkness; the sword a beam of fire in his hand. The field echoes from wing to wing, as a hundred hammers, that rise, by turns, on the red son of the furnace. Who are these on Lena's heath, these so gloomy and dark? Who are these like two clouds, and their swords like lightning above

them? The little hills are troubled around; the rocks tremble with all their moss. Who is it but ocean's son and the car-borne chief of Erin? Many are the anxious eyes of their friends, as they see them dim on the heath. But night conceals the chiefs in clouds, and ends the dreadful fight!

Night gives opportunity for episodes of the supernatural.

The rest lay in the heath of the deer, and slept beneath the dusky wind. The ghosts of the lately dead were near, and swam on the gloomy clouds; and far distant, in the dark silence of Lena, the feeble voices of death were faintly heard. Connal . . . beheld, in his rest, a dark red stream of fire rushing down from the hill. Crugal sat upon the beam, a chief who fell in fight. He fell by the hand of Swaran, striving in the battle of heroes. His face is like the beam of the setting moon. His robes are of the clouds of the hill. His eyes are two decaying flames. Dark is the wound of his breast. . . . Faintly he raised his feeble voice, like the gale of the reedy Lego. . . . The stars dim-twinkled through his form.

It is these nocturnal pauses in the fight that bring the variety of episodes, heroes and bards exchanging stories. They think of the great Fingal hurrying to their rescue, and we hear an episode of his early love. How he had accepted the treacherous hospitality of Selma's king, and the snare was being spread for his life.

He praised the daughter of Lochlin: and Morven's high descended chief. The daughter of Lochlin overheard. She left the hall of her secret sigh! She came in all her beauty, like the moon from the cloud of the east. Loveliness was round her as light. Her steps were the music of songs. She saw the youth and loved him. He was the stolen sigh of her soul.

She gives secret warning of the secret plot, and Fingal falls on the conspirators.

The sons of death fell by his hand: and Gormal echoed around! Before the halls of Starno the sons of the chase convened. The king's dark brows were like clouds; his eyes like meteors of night. "Bring hither," he said, "Agandecca to her lovely king of Morven! His hand is stained with the blood of my people; her words have not been in vain!" She came with the red eye of tears. She came with loosely-flowing locks. Her white breast heaved with broken sighs, like the foam of the streamy Lubar. Starno pierced her side with steel. She fell, like a wreath of snow, which slides from the rocks of Ronan; when the woods are still, and echo deepens in the vale! Then Fingal eyed his valiant chiefs, his valiant chiefs took arms! The gloom of battle roared: Lochlin fled or died. Pale in his bounding ship he closed the maid of the softest soul. Her tomb ascends on Ardven; the sea roars around her narrow dwelling.

An episode of a warrior coming by night, wounded as he is, to give warning of danger, contains a passage which brings home to us how deeply this life of Celtic poetry is sunk into the heart of nature.

"Why bursts that broken sigh, from the breast of him who never feared before?" "And never, Connal, will he fear, chief of the pointed steel! My soul brightens in danger: in the noise of arms. I am of the race of battle. My fathers never feared. Cormar was the first of my race. He sported through the storms of waves. His black skiff bounded on ocean; he travelled on the wings of the wind. A spirit once embroiled the night. Seas swell and rocks resound. Winds drive along the clouds. The lightning flies on wings of fire. He feared, and came to land, then blushed that he feared at all. He rushed again among the waves, to find the son of the wind. Three youths guide the bounding bark: he stood with sword unsheathed. When the low-hung vapor passed, he took it by the curling head. He searched its dark womb with his steel. The son of the wind forsook the air. The moon and stars returned! Such was the boldness of my race."

The Homer of all this epic poetry is Ossian; he is at once hero and bard; one of the sons of the mighty Fingal, he has his share of the deeds he is to make immortal. But the traditional conception of the rhapsodist obtains here also: in old age he sings of strenuous life belonging to a generation forever passed.

Many a voice and many a harp in tuneful sounds arose. Of Fingal noble deeds they sung; of Fingal's noble race; and sometimes, on the lovely sound, was heard the name of Ossian. I often fought, and often won, in battles of the spear. But blind, and tearful, and forlorn, I walk with little men! O Fingal, with thy race of war I now behold thee not. The wild roes feed on the green tomb of the mighty King of Morven! . . . I am sad, forlorn, and blind: no more the companion of heroes! . . . I have seen the tombs of all my friends!

V

From the literary point of view the Norse is among the greatest of Aryan civilizations. A vast body of poetic material is stored in the Icelandic sagas. Great in its native dress, this has become still greater by finding an Homeric interpreter in William Morris; *Sigurd the Volsung* represents perhaps the highest point to which the epic poetry of the world has attained. There is nothing that can be compared with it except the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. And what thus stand out as the masterpieces of world epic have the added interest of sharp contrast; as far as the south-east is from the north-west so great is the distance between the fresh simplicity of the world's youth, voiced by the Greeks, and the Norse presentation of its late maturity, with its complex motives and profound moral depth. It would be violating all

the proportions of the matter entering into the present chapter to attempt any adequate account of Morris's poem: I can only indicate some of its broader features.[1]

Any epic poem on a large scale must reflect the philosophy underlying the life it presents. For this the matter of the Norse poem offers specially wide scope: to get a Greek parallel we should have to put together the widely different poetry of Hesiod and of Homer. The northern conception of life and the universe seems to turn upon two main ideas, Fate and Evolution. Destiny deeply overshadows the world of Morris's poem. Yet it is a Destiny strangely harmonious with the conception of human Will.

Know thou, most mighty of men, that the Norns shall order all,
And yet without thine helping shall no whit of their will befall;
Be wise! 'tis a marvel of words, and a mock for the fool and the blind;
But I saw it writ in the heavens, and its fashioning there did I find:
And the night of the Norns and their slumber, and the tide when the world runs back,
And the way of the sun is tangled, it is wrought of the dastard's lack.
But the day when the fair earth blossoms, and the sun is bright above,
Of the daring deeds is it fashioned and the eager hearts of love.

When we put together the action of the poem with the back glances into the infinite past afforded by the stories of Regin and Brynhild and the songs of Gunnar, we seem to catch a complete course of world evolution from first to last. We have first unconscious or blind evolu-

[1] Fuller treatment will be found in my *Syllabus of Study in the Poetry and Fiction of William Morris.* (See below, page 490.)

tion: chaos slowly settling into order. Then the Gods appear, and give direction or purpose to the evolution, fashioning or sundering things into types and antitheses. Fixed semblances of things take the place of wavering or variable semblances; thus the marvels of witchcraft and metamorphosis, which play so important a part in the action, are merely reversions to an earlier stage of evolution, to the "craft of the kings of aforetime," or "the craft that prevaileth o'er semblance." With this influence of the Gods passion takes the place of the older "careless life"; desire comes in, and therefore grief; evil and good are blended —

The good and the evil wedded and begat the best and the worst.

More than this, the Gods have subjected themselves to the evolution they have created, infusing principles, and then without intervention awaiting the issue of these upon their creation and upon themselves. Thus the era in which events are happening — what in modern phrase we should call Time, as distinguished from Eternity — presents itself as a Day of the Gods, passing through its stages of morning and noon to the "Dusk of the Gods": when all will culminate in the Judgment, unmixed Evil confronting unmixed Good, and the issue of this final struggle is unknown. Now, man's place in this universe is that of an ally of the Gods for this final struggle. Hence the supreme moral conception for man is the warrior virtue, fitting for the final conflict; and the highest dignity for woman is to be a "chooser of the slain" — that is, gatherer for Odin of the fit warriors whom Fate has removed from this life. The

outer sign of this virtue is glad, decisive action, of which the "laugh" of Sigurd is the spontaneous expression. Repentance has no place in this system of fate. Death is the grand disentanglement of moral complications, transplanting to the higher struggle beyond the grave. And if fate means an unchangeable future, its counterpart is the irrevocable past: death ends the power of action, but "the tale abides to tell."

Yea, and thy deeds thou shalt know, and great shall thy gladness be;
As a picture all of gold thy life-days shalt thou see,
And know that thou too wert a God to abide through the hurry and haste;
A God in the golden hall, a God on the rain-swept waste,
A God in the battle triumphant, a God on the heap of the slain:
And thine hope shall arise and blossom, and thy love shall be quickened again:
And then shalt thou see before thee the face of all earthly ill;
Thou shalt drink of the cup of awakening that thine hand hath holpen to fill.

In poetic art there is an interesting point of contrast between Greek and Norse. A notable feature of Homeric poetry is the formal simile; and we have already seen [1] how beauties of nature in large amount are, by this device of comparison, drawn within the body of the poem. In *Sigurd* formal similes are few; there is the same wealth of nature beauties, but they are worked into the incidents themselves and made a part of them. This Dramatic Background of Nature is a leading feature of the poem. Reiterated touches of detail keep before the reader the natural surroundings of an incident,

[1] Above, pages 132–4.

especially changes of light, and these are made to move mystically in harmony with the movement of the incident itself. Thus the central incident, the awakening of Brynhild, is worked out with great elaborateness; as we follow through the long-drawn sense of expectation to the climax, we find the gradual approach of daylight indicated by continuous touches and fine gradations of growing light, until the sudden blaze of the risen sun flashes on the kiss that begins Sigurd's day of love. On the contrary, the approach of Sigurd to the Burg of the Niblungs is mystically accompanied with suggestions of day giving place to night, of cloud-threatenings and angry heavens. The long-drawn suspense of waiting for the murder of Sigurd is punctuated by stages in the passing of night — waning moonlight, fading torches, the glimmer growing on the pavement, the dawn spread wide and gray: broad day falls on his visage as he lies dead. Hardly a single incident of the whole poem is without some such background of external nature.

But of course the main interest in an epic poem must be the action itself, of which the formulation is what we call the plot. For the ultimate basis of his plot Morris has gone down to the very foundation, perhaps of all mythology, certainly of Norse poetry, the conflict of light and darkness. This takes the form of Niblung and Volsung, the Cloudy People and the People of Brightness. The Niblung People have their seat in the cloudy drift: —

A long way off before him come up the mountains grey;
Grey, huge beyond all telling, and the host of the heapèd clouds,
The black and the white together, on that rock-wall's coping crowds;

But whiles are rents athwart them, and the hot sun pierceth through,
And there glow the angry cloud-caves 'gainst the everlasting blue,
And the changeless snow amidst it; but down from that cloudy head
The scars of fires that have been show grim and dusky-red;
And lower yet are the hollows striped down by the scanty green,
And lingering flecks of the cloud-host are tangled there-between,
White, pillowy, lit by the sun, unchanged by the drift of the wind.

In such scenery the Niblung Palace stands, as if itself were a thing of nature.

One house in the midst is unhidden and high up o'er the wall it goes;
Aloft in the wind of the mountains its golden roof-ridge glows,
And down mid its buttressed feet is the wind's voice never still;
And the day and the night pass o'er it and it changes to their will,
And whiles it is glassy and dark, and whiles it is white and dead,
And whiles it is grey as the sea-mead, and whiles it is angry red;
And it shimmers under the sunshine and grows black to the threat of the storm,
And dusk its gold roof glimmers when the rain-clouds over it swarm,
And bright in the first of the morning its flame doth it uplift,
When the light clouds rend before it and along its furrows drift.

In antithesis to the Niblungs we have the "Afterseed of the Volsungs." The People of Brightness have gradually died away; twice the whole stock of Volsung is represented by a single life; then the last spark shoots up into the glorious Sigurd, who concentrates the whole brightness of the people in himself. Sigurd is presented as the supreme excellence of human nature; and certainly beside his bright all-round perfection other heroes of epic poetry seem meagre. But the material of the poem is well balanced; and in those who are opposed by the action to Sigurd—those who, in stage

phrase, must be called the villains of the piece — it is remarkable how much of force and attractive goodness is to be found.

> There is Gunnar the great and fair,
> With the lovely face of a king 'twixt the night of his wavy hair;
> And there is the wise-heart Hogni; and his lips are close and thin,
> And grey and awful his eyen, and a many sights they win:
> And there is Guttorm the youngest, of the fierce and wandering glance,
> And the heart that never resteth till the swords in the war-wind dance;
> And there is Gudrun his daughter, and light she stands by the board,
> And fair are her arms in the hall as the beaker's flood is poured;
> She comes, and the earls keep silence; she smiles, and men rejoice;
> She speaks, and the harps unsmitten thrill faint to her queenly voice.

The poem is in four books. In the architecture of the plot it is the second and third books that make the main building, the first and fourth are the wings. It is the middle books that give us the clash of Volsung and Niblung. The first book is devoted to the Rise of the Volsungs; that is, the strange preservation of the Volsung stock through what is all but extinction until it culminates in the glory of Sigurd. The last book gives the Fall of the Niblungs after their treachery to Sigurd has been consummated, their magnificent fight against hopeless Destiny, till they are exterminated by the vengeance of their wronged sister. But the whole plot is more complex than this. As Sigurd, in the second book, moves through his career to the point of meeting the Niblungs, he passes through two adventures, which draw new elements into the story. He rides through

the fire and awakens Brynhild: the whole story of the Valkyrie Maiden who has sought to manipulate Fate becomes part of the action. And he recovers the gold treasure of the waters; we are carried back to pre-human eras, and the Curse of Andvari, which has clung to the treasure of the waters through all time, becomes the enveloping action of the whole plot, the Destiny that entangles all its actors.

Such is the epic complexity of the plot: its crisis is more like the crisis of drama. No more deeply interesting psychological situation has ever been imagined than that which is brought about by the treachery of Grimhild, the Niblungs' device to keep the supreme greatness of Sigurd entirely for themselves. Magic, we have seen, fits naturally into the thought of the poem; by magic device the love of Brynhild is smitten out of the heart of Sigurd as completely as if a portion of his brain had been removed by surgical operation. In what follows he is as irresponsible as a madman: the difference is, that the force of the magic must pass in time, and Sigurd is left in full consciousness of the moral ruin in which, with his own hand, he has plunged himself and all he loves. And the ruin must go on, unmitigated, until death comes to bring relief; meanwhile, Sigurd's whole soul is strung up to self-restraint from the emptiness of revenge, and to patient living for the good of the people.

Lo, Sigurd fair on the high-seat by the white-armed Gudrun's side,
In the midst of the Cloudy People, in the dwelling of their pride!
His face is exceeding glorious and awful to behold;
For of all his sorrow he knoweth and his hope smit dead and cold:

The will of the Norns is accomplished, and, lo, they wend on their ways,
And leave the mighty Sigurd to deal with the latter days:
The Gods look down from heaven, and the lonely King they see,
And sorrow over his sorrow, and rejoice in his majesty.
For the will of the Norns is accomplished, and outworn is Grimhild's spell,
And nought now shall blind or help him, and the tale shall be to tell.
He knows of the net of the days, and the deeds that the Gods have bid,
And no whit of the sorrow that shall be from his wakened soul is hid:
And his glory his heart restraineth, and restraineth the hand of the strong
From the hope of the fools of desire and the wrong that amendeth wrong. . . .
— Lo, such is the high Gods' sorrow, and men know nought thereof,
Who cry out o'er their undoing, and wail o'er broken love.

VI

Our chart of world literature, constructed as it is from the English point of view, puts into a single group the civilizations of the world outside the Semitic and Aryan families. To this group belong the civilizations of China and Japan. To literary science the Chinese and Japanese literatures will always be important; yet it cannot be said that any part of these has been adopted into the world literature of the west. But from another of the extraneous civilizations, the Finnish, has come a masterpiece of poetry in the *Kalevala*. It is not a century since this poem was first brought to light; at once philologists like Jacob Grimm and Max Müller welcomed it into the inner circle of the

world's epics; the poet Longfellow, by a mediating interpretation of a peculiar kind, caught its inspiration, and transferred it to the mythology of the American Indians in his *Hiawatha.* Nothing is so unanalyzable as genius, we can only recognize it when we find it; in this case the poetic genius of the Finnish people has availed to transport a poem from the outer extremity of the literary field into the very heart of European literature. But there is something more to be said. Literature in the earlier stages of evolution must in the general course of things perish; it is made up of oral poetry with nothing to record it, poetry which will either cease to be, or be absorbed into literature of more advanced stages. But genius can operate at any point: in the present case the genius of Finnish minstrelsy has raised to permanent vitality poetry in primitive forms, which in other literatures have passed away leaving only accidental traces. Thus, not only does the *Kalevala* touch every reader with the spell of its intrinsic beauty, but it has further the double interest of putting us in touch with a distant civilization, and bringing home to us poetic forms far down the scale of literary evolution.

Perhaps the first impression which the action of this poem makes upon the modern reader is the absence in it of all reality. Reality is, of course, in no way inconsistent with abundance of miracle and marvel: the *Iliad* is full of miraculous incidents, yet it reads to us as real life, though a real life containing elements which are absent from our own. It is otherwise with the Finnish poem: nothing in this is supernatural, because there is no basis of the natural with which to make com-

parison. External nature with its rocks and streams, things of vegetable and animal life, human beings and gods, all seem the same thing with attributes in common. The *Metamorphoses* of Ovid is a poem founded wholly on miracle, yet it does not fail to give us real life; as we read we realize what it feels like to change from a man into a tree or bird. In the *Kalevala* the man does not *change* into the eagle, he simply *becomes* the eagle. All this is a source of great intellectual interest in the poem. We are accustomed to think what we call reality a simple thing, to which creative imagination has added elements of the marvellous. The truth is of course the reverse of this: the earliest thinkings of mankind were filled with highly complex elements unseparated, and what we call reality is the climax of a long series of differentiations, with nature, men, and gods distinguished, mind and matter divided, each with its proper attributes. The thought of the *Kalevala* antedates most of these differentiations; we are reminded of the Norse conception of evolution as it appears in *Sigurd*, and how it was only at a definite period that the varying semblances of things gave place to fixed semblances, each after its kind.[1] It is one thing to know as a scientific fact that human thought has passed through such an evolutionary stage, and to describe it by some such word as "animism." It is quite another thing to be transported by force of poetic genius into the very heart of this primitive thinking, and to find its ideas and conceptions playing in rhythmic beauty around us.

[1] Compare above, page 326.

Similarly, in its poetic form the *Kalevala* takes us back to an early stage of literary evolution, in which epic is just beginning to draw apart from lyric form. A body launched in space must move in one of two ways: either its course will return upon itself, and make some form of circle or ellipse, or, not returning, it will make an endless progression in parabolic or hyperbolic curve. There is a similar elementary distinction in poetic form, between the lyric, that celebrates things in rhythms which return upon themselves, and the epic, which indicates a progression of incidents. The *Kalevala* is rightly called an epic poem: yet we feel that here the progression of incidents with difficulty makes itself felt, as against the lyric tendency to emphasize the separate incidents with reiteration and rhythmic recurrence.

Many elements of rhythm combine in this poem. First, we have metre: this is as simple as metre can be; the jingle —

Diddlediddle diddlediddle

exactly represents it. In the original, this metre is supported by alliteration; but — so far as an outsider may judge — this is not the essential alliteration of Old English poetry, but merely an adjunct to the metre, like the alliteration that strengthens Spenser's verse. In the third place, we have the rhythm of parallelism, as in Hebrew poetry. Consecutive lines run in parallel clauses; often whole paragraphs are parallel, with common refrains; at times we have wide reaches of purely parallel lines.

Once before have ills assailed me,[1]
Plagues from somewhere have attacked me,
From the realms of mighty sorcerers,
From the meadows of the soothsayers,
And the homes of evil spirits,
And the plains where dwell the wizards,
From the dreary heaths of Kalma,
From beneath the firm earth's surface,
From the dwellings of the dead men,
From the realms of the departed,
From the loose earth heaped in hillocks,
From the regions of the landslips,
From the loose and gravelly districts,
From the shaking sandy regions,
From the valleys deeply sunken,
From the moss-grown swampy districts,
From the marshes all unfrozen,
From the billows ever tossing,
From the stalls in Hiisi's forest,
From fire gorges in the mountains,
From the slopes of copper mountains,
From their summits all of copper,
From the ever-rustling pine-trees,
And the rustling of the fir-trees, —

The passage continues to the extent of fifty lines. Again, this parallelism unites naturally with numerical progressions. Thus as the commonest of conventional expressions we have —

Thus he drove one day, a second,
Drove upon the third day likewise —

or more elaborately —

[1] The quotations are from Mr. Kirby's translation: see below, page 489.

Drift for six years like a pine-tree,
And for seven years like a fir-tree,
And for eight years like a tree-stump.

Sometimes these numerical amplifications are too much for our perverse modern spirit of humor. Thus of the minstrel, weeping at the pathos of his own songs:

From his eyes there fell the tear-drops,
Others followed after others,
Tears upon his cheeks were falling,
Down upon his cheeks so handsome,
Rolling from his cheeks so handsome
Down upon his chin's expansion,
Rolling from his chin's expansion
Down upon his panting bosom,
Rolling from his panting bosom
Down upon his strong knee's surface,
Rolling from his strong knee's surface
Down upon his feet so handsome,
Rolling from his feet so handsome
Down upon the ground beneath them,
And five woollen cloaks were soaking,
Likewise six of gilded girdles,
Seven blue dresses too were soaking,
And ten overcoats were soaking.

All these elements of rhythm coöperate in the *Kalevala*. But there is another, which seems to pass beyond rhythm, and enter deeply into the plot and movement of the poem. A rudimentary type of plot is that which may be called the one-two-three form, or numerical series. It applies to all kinds of poetry. Take the biblical epigram: —

There be three things which are too wonderful for me,
Yea, four which I know not:

> The way of an Eagle in the air;
> The way of a Serpent upon a rock;
> The way of a Ship in the midst of the sea;
> And the way of a Man with a Maid.

It is obvious that the point of the epigram is the last line, and the other three wonders are introduced only to make the fourth wonder appear as a climax. This one-two-three form is common in fables or folk-stories. Three sons of a father are to learn separate trades, and the one who proves most skilful in his trade is to inherit the family property. One son becomes a barber, one a farrier, one a fencer. When they meet their father again, the first son accomplishes the feat of shaving a racer as he runs past. The farrier fixes shoes on the horses of a chariot without stopping it. The party are overtaken by a shower, and the son who is a fencer waves his sword with such rapidity that the rain is warded off as completely as by an umbrella: the family property is voted to him. It is obvious that the form of this story is made by introducing the two inferior feats as a background for the third. Now, this one-two-three form pervades every part of the *Kalevala*, and is its most distinctive literary feature. There is, of course, no sanctity in the number three: the series may be of four, five, up to eight details, but in all cases the rest of the details simply lead to the last as a climax. The Lord of Pohja hears the dogs at his gate barking, and bids his daughter go and see the cause of this: but the daughter has other occupations.

> "I have not the time, my father,
> I must clean the largest cowshed,

Tend our herd of many cattle,
Grind the corn between the millstones,
Through the sieve must sift the flour,
Grind the corn to finest flour,
And the grinder is but feeble."

The dogs bark still, and the Lord of Pohja bids his dame go and investigate: but she also is busy.

"This is not a time for talking,
For my household cares are heavy,
And I must prepare the dinner,
And must bake a loaf enormous,
And for this the dough be kneading,
Bake the loaf of finest flour,
And the baker is but feeble."

Pohja's Master grumbles at women and their cares, but bids his son go and find the cause of the dogs' barking.

Thereupon the son made answer:
"I've no time to look about me;
I must grind the blunted hatchet,
Chop a log of wood to pieces,
Chop to bits the largest wood-pile,
And to faggots small reduce it.
Large the pile, and small the faggots,
And the workman of the weakest."

The dogs still bark, and Pohja's Master rises himself and goes to reconnoitre. Now — unless some one is prepared to suggest as underlying moral that in Pohjola "everybody works but father" — we must recognize that poetic form is being given to a trifling detail by this device of numerical series, three negatives leading to the climax of a positive act. And the reader of the

Kalevala will recognize this one-two-three form as constantly recurring in application to every type of incident. It seems a small matter for Ilmarinen's sister, when she sees Vainamoinen sailing in his boat, to ask him where he is going. But the answer is not simple. First he says he is going salmon-fishing: but the maid points to the absence in his boat of the proper tackle. Then he says he is wandering in search of geese: but Annikki has witnessed hunting, and can expose this deceit. Then Vainamoinen declares he is on his way to a mighty fight: but Annikki has seen the ways of battle in her father's time, and convicts him of another lie. Only when the question is repeated a fourth time, does the real answer come: —

All the truth I now will tell you,
Though at first I lied a little.

In precisely the same fashion, Vainamoinen, questioned why he has come to the River of Darkness unsubdued by death or disease, gives four obviously false reasons, and on the fifth repetition of the inquiry, says: —

True it is I lied a little,
And again I spoke a falsehood,
But at length I answer truly.

So deeply is the one-two-three form embedded in Finnish minstrelsy that a man must needs tell a series of lies before he can permit himself to tell the truth.

All this has a bearing upon the struggle between lyric and epic, which marks the stage of literary evolution to which the Finnish poem belongs. What I have called the one-two-three form is obviously lyric in spirit:

it is the *pulsam ter pede terram* of the dance. Forms of recurrence seem to pass into progressive action by extension of the numerical series: we have a succession of such series, or perhaps the climax of a numerical series breaks down and so opens up another series. It is difficult to convey the idea otherwise than by illustration.[1] Vainamoinen woos the Maid of Pohja in her rainbow splendor: she sets him feats by which to win her, and we at once get the one-two-three form. He must split a horsehair with a blunt knife and tie an egg in knots: the sorcerer at once does this. Again, he must peel a stone and hew a pile of ice without splinters: Vainamoinen finds this no hard task. Once more, he must carve a boat from splinters of a spindle and shuttle. Vainamoinen declares this is easy; but this climax of the one-two-three series breaks down, for a chance stroke of his axe wounds Vainamoinen in the knee. The blood flows in truly epic profusion —

> Seven large boats with blood are brimming,
> Eight large tubs are overflowing —

and as the wounded hero in his sledge seeks for help, another one-two-three form develops. He passes one homestead asking if there is any one to heal him, and a child by the stove replies there is no one; he passes another homestead, and a crone from beneath the quilt gives the same answer; he passes a third, and an old man by the stove replies that greater floods than this have been stemmed by the words of the

[1] The illustration that follows extends through Runes VIII and IX of the poem.

Creator. But this apparent climax to the numerical series breaks down, for, as he sets about the task of healing, the old man finds he has forgotten the "word of origin" for iron — the secret history of iron that will prove a spell against its effects. Vainamoinen can supply this; and the "word of origin" proves an episode in itself, which falls into a succession of number series. We hear of the three children of primeval Air — Water the eldest, Iron the youngest, Fire in the midst between them. Three daughters of Creation stroll on the borders of the cloudlets, and milk from their breasts drops on earth: where black milk from the first drops, the softest Iron is found; where white milk from the second, is found hard steel; where red milk from the third has trickled, undeveloped Iron appears. Now an elaborate example of the one-two-three form follows. Iron desires to visit his brother Fire, but has to fly from his fury and take refuge in the swamps. A second time Iron would visit Fire, when wolves and bears have uncovered what the swamps had hidden; there is now the smith Ilmarinen to cast the Iron into the Fire, and it is elaborately told how the smith makes the Iron swear to do only peaceful acts before he will deliver it from the fury of the Fire. There is still however the tempering of the Iron, and this makes the climax of the series: while the smith is seeking honey of the bee for the tempering mixture, the hornet brings instead venom and acid, and this is how the Iron violates its oath and inflicts wounds on its friends. The word of origin for Iron and its evils being thus supplied, the old man can now proceed with

the spell that is to stop the flow of blood. The spell makes several series in succession of parallel paragraphs. A series with the refrain —

Once thou wast devoid of greatness —

is followed by the one-two-three form: Who has led thee to this outrage? not this, not that, not the other relation, but thy own self. Then follows an appeal to the flowing blood, the parallel paragraphs of which are on a liturgical model that appears often in the poem. The flow of blood at last stops; but the remainder of the healing process opens another number series. A boy is sent to procure healing ointment: the bee supplies honey, but this mixed with many herbs proves insufficient. Then the boy tries herbs culled by nine magicians and eight wise seers: the mixture fixes broken trees and stones, and is pronounced by the old man sufficient, yet when it is applied Vainamoinen writhes in agony. Finally, the old man binds the wound with a silken fabric, and with this climax to the last number series the whole incident terminates.

We may go farther, and say that the plot of the poem as a whole is a variant of the one-two-three series which gives form to so many of the detailed incidents. It must be remembered that the *Kalevala* was put into its present form by Topelius and Lönnrot less than a century ago. But their work is not to be understood as the process sometimes called *Homerization* — independent creative work bringing floating matter into coherence: it was a brilliant reconstruction out of fragments of a unity belonging to the poem in ancient

times. Every reader will feel that the progressive action of the whole poem is dim in comparison with the lyric expansion of the separate incidents. But this progressive movement, such as it is, seems that of the numerical series. The poem is arranged in fifty runes or cantos. The first two and the last must be written off as prologue and epilogue: the remaining cantos give us the whole plot. As the war of Greek and Trojan makes an Enveloping Action for the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, so here an Enveloping Action appears in the rivalry of Kalevala, the Land of Heroes, and the far distant Pohjola, gloomy region of the north. The three heroes, Vainamoinen, Ilmarinen, Lemminkainen, make raids from their Kalevala to this Pohjola. The whole movement falls into three phases, through which we can trace progression: it being always remembered that at any point the detailed incidents can be expanded out of all proportion to their bearing on the general plot. The first phase of the movement (Runes III to XV) gives us the heroes making separate expeditions to the north. Vainamoinen, having lost his expected bride, Aino, seeks a bride in the land of Pohjola, and after various adventures returns disappointed; then Ilmarinen is forced to visit the same region, and, though he forges for the northerners the Sampo, yet he returns without the bride; then Lemminkainen makes his raid on the north in search of a bride, with consequences that bring on him death, from which he is resuscitated by his loving mother. In the second phase of the movement (Runes XVI to XXX) there is some union between the heroes. Vainamoinen and

Ilmarinen go to Pohjola in friendly rivalry; Ilmarinen wins the bride, and there is elaborate celebration of the wedding; but Lemminkainen, pointedly omitted from the invitation list, works a terrible revenge on the Lord of Pohjola, with terrible nemesis upon himself. What opens the third phase of the movement is the longest of digressions: six runes relate the tragic history of Kullervo, a separate poem in itself. Its only connection with the general plot is that one of Kullervo's victims is the wife of Ilmarinen, and this leads Ilmarinen to seek another daughter of the north. This project introduces the final phase of the action,[1] in which the three heroes, now in full coöperation, make their raid upon the land of Pohjola: fearful magic contests ensue, in which the very sun and moon are lost to the world, until at last the heroes of Kalevala are triumphant, and the balance of the world is restored. The three phases of the movement thus seem to make the one-two-three form with its climax. The two introductory cantos give the origin of the world in general, such as in other languages so often commences a grand epic. And the final rune is a piece of dim symbolism, suggesting how a new era — perhaps the Christian faith — is coming in, and the poet feels that his songs belong to a past era that will never return.

I have said that the action of the poem lacks reality; but there is plenty of reality in the picture of life which it presents. And the life presented is above all family life: the household with its four centres of father, mother, brother, sister; incidents of the bath and the

[1] Runes XXXVII to XLIX.

toilet; cooking and feasting; dancing maids and bold lovers. The main personages are types: Ilmarinen and Vainamoinen seem to differ as the mechanical arts differ from what we call fine arts; while Lemminkainen suggests the idle life that has however plenty of vigor when necessity requires. A conventional position is given to the old crone, or the old man past work, or the babe, as utterers of oracular wisdom. And the supreme interest of all is that of wooing and marriage: while most of the incidents are briefly told, more than three thousand lines are devoted to the wedding ceremony of Ilmarinen united with the daughter of the north. Nowhere in the poetry of the world do we find celebrated with so much force and beauty as here that mingling of joy and sorrow which belongs to every wedding, when the rapture of youthful love clashes with the pang of the maiden life transplanted from home surroundings into an alien soil. The wedding ceremony has already been elaborated at length when the moment of parting comes.

Bridegroom, dearest of my brothers,
Wait a week, and yet another;
For thy loved one is not ready,
And her toilet is not finished.
Only half her hair is plaited,
And a half is still unplaited.

Bridegroom, dearest of my brothers,
Wait a week, and yet another,
For thy loved one is not ready,
And her toilet is not finished;
One sleeve only is adjusted,
And unfitted still the other.

Through two more stanzas the bridegroom must wait for the putting on of shoes and gloves; and then: —

Bridegroom, dearest of my brothers,
Thou hast waited long unwearied;
For thy love at length is ready,
And thy duck has made her toilet.

But the song calls upon the bride to survey both sides of the question, and dwells, detail by detail, on all she is leaving behind her; the tearful girl —

One foot resting on the threshold,
In my husband's sledge the other —

realizes how different this is from the joyous picture of wedlock she had fancied. An old crone of the household rubs this sore, instead of bringing the plaster: she reiterates the warnings against lovers she had uttered; insists upon the terrible change of surroundings: —

In thy home thou wast a floweret,
And the joy of father's household,
And thy father called thee Moonlight,
And thy mother called thee Sunshine,
And thy brother Sparkling Water,
And thy sister called thee Blue-cloth.
To another home thou goest,
There to find a stranger mother. . . .
Sprig the father shouts against thee,
Slut the mother calls unto thee,
And the brother calls thee Doorstep,
And the sister, Nasty Creature.

A fancy picture of the new home with all possible horrors is detailed by this old crone, and song follows with the refrain: —

Weep thou, weep thou, youthful maiden,
When thou weepest, weep thou sorely.

The bride does weep — filling her fists with tears of longing — at her sad fate: then an infant on the floor strikes the opposite tone, and oracularly describes the new home and household as full of all good. It is now time to instruct the bride: at interminable length the wise woman counsels her upon all the details of household life, in the midst of which she is to restrain her own feelings and be subservient to all around her in the new home. But a wandering old dame strikes a contrary note, and tells how she did all this, and yet found nothing but misery, running away at last to her old home only to see desolation and experience neglect. The bridegroom in turn is instructed — in the fullest detail — how he is to be a model husband, and protect his wife from all ill; even if she prove refractory, he must be patient: —

In the bed do thou instruct her,
And behind the door advise her,
For a whole year thus instruct her,
Thus by word of mouth advise her,
With thine eyes the next year teach her,
And the third year teach by stamping.

An old man by the stove strikes a contrary note: he so dealt with his wife, and found it would not answer.

But I knew another method,
Knew another way to tame her;
So I peeled myself a birch-shoot,
When she came, and called me birdie;

But when juniper I gathered,
Then she stooped, and called me darling;
When I lifted rods of willow,
On my neck she fell embracing.

The bride now completely breaks down, and in long-drawn details of pathetic reminiscence takes farewell of the loved surroundings of her home; she pictures herself returning to it at some future time only to find all changed, with but the old stallion she had fed, and her brother's favorite dog, to recognize her. She is whirled away in Ilmarinen's sledge, and experiences a home-coming in which the picture is reversed, and nothing seems too good to be said or done for the cuckoo, the rosy water-maiden, the blue duck, the fresh cherry branch, that has been brought into the old home. It is one of the surprises of world literature that from the most distant point of the literary field, and from the earliest stages of poetry, comes what, with all its quaintness, is the sweetest and most elaborate celebration of wedding joys and sorrows.

CHAPTER VII

COMPARATIVE READING

COMPARATIVE Literature has become a familiar term. As before remarked, it seems to be a middle stage between the purely departmental treatment of literature, which has prevailed in the past, and that which is surely coming—the study of literature as an organic whole. Usage however seems to associate the term with discussions that are formally historic or scientific: the suggestion of this chapter is that the comparative treatment applies not less to the study of literature which is purely appreciative. For the comparative attitude of mind is a wonderful quickener of insight. A man may have come by unconscious tradition to speak his own language with correctness and discrimination: when he proceeds to study some other language, or some two or three others, with their resemblances and differences, he wakes up to the fact that he never before realized what language really was. Or again, a man may be familiar with the constitution of his own country, and know much about the constitutions of other states; but when he reads Aristotle or Macchiavelli, and sees constitutions formally compared, he realizes that there is such a thing as political science. The principle holds good in literary culture.

The most desultory reading need not lose any of its charm by the reader's having acquired a habit of mental grouping in the selection of what he is to read. He may feel after various treatments of a common theme that come from widely sundered literatures, or from different literary types; or, with less direct connection than this, diverse pieces of literature will group themselves to his mind in relations which may be highly interesting to feel, though not easy to formulate. Such Comparative Reading gives us the miscellaneous reader in his attitude to the unity of literature.

A favorite group of my own has for its centre the *Alcestis* of Euripides. With this it is natural to put, what professes to be a version, what is really a *perversion* of that play, though an eminently beautiful poem in itself, Robert Browning's *Balaustion's Adventure.* Alfieri, of whom it is sometimes said that he is to continental Europe what Shakespeare is to England, has been inspired by Euripides' play to give us his *Alcestis the Second.* The world's greatest story-teller, William Morris, has a *Love of Alcestis* as one of the tales in his *Earthly Paradise.* All these are different versions of the same story; and the list can easily be extended. But I would especially add, as a counterpart to the rest of the group, an analogous story cast in the atmosphere of modern religion — the *Golden Legend* of Longfellow.

To one familiar with Greek life and the conventions of the Attic stage the *Alcestis* is an eminently simple play. Admetus, King of Pheræ, is the great type of Hospitality: not in the modern sense of the word, which makes it little more than entertainment; but

the lofty Greek ideal of a sacred bond between host-friend and guest-friend that gives the fullest scope for gracious and self-sacrificing demeanor. Heaven itself has recognized the hospitality of Admetus, and the god Apollo, condemned to spend a year on earth, has made himself an inmate of his house; there seems to Apollo to be a spirit of holiness pervading the entire household. Apollo has sought to bestow on his host-friend the gift of immortality; his great struggle with the Fates has proved but half successful, and Admetus is to escape death only if a willing substitute be found. But all have drawn back, even the aged father and mother of the king, with so few days to give up: Alcestis, in the full tide of her youth, has made herself the victim to save her husband and king. The drama opens with the fatal day, and the splendid palace plunged in mourning; we see Apollo making one more effort to restrain Death, but the monster shudders out his refusal: —

Greater my glory when the youthful die!

To Alcestis it is a glory thus by her life to save the state: she opens the day with festal dress and demeanor, but breaks down at the farewell visit to the bridal chamber. True to the religion of brightness, she has herself carried in her agonies outside the palace to see once more the glorious sky: but the scene around her changes to the regions of the dead. She rallies her strength to make an appeal for her little children, that no second mother be put over them when she is gone: Admetus renounces, not wedlock alone, but all forms

of joy save the gazing on the image of his wife. dies, and the Chorus sing her requiem, once dwelling on the strangeness of age shrinking death and youth taking its place. Suddenly th a turn in the action: a guest-friend of the hou pears in Hercules — the Hercules of tragedy, whole life is a succession of toils by which to away the evils of the world. When he sees tok mourning, Hercules is for withdrawing and se hospitality elsewhere; Admetus waves aside his sition, and — with the parallel verse which the stage loves — fences with Hercules' questions, le him to suppose that this is only some commo bereavement. He commits Hercules to the car Steward, giving orders that all doors shall be b lest any sound of mourning might disturb the se of his guest. At this picture of self-restraint Chorus are moved to an ode which celebrates the record of the hospitable house: they strangely c note of hope. The funeral procession is inter by a harsh discord: Pheres, the aged father of the wishes to join and is repelled. This is the "fo contest" of the drama, in which, by a convention Greek stage, the wrong side of the situation is, doxically, to be made as vivid as the right side. metus emphasizes the one thought: —

Is Death alike then to the young and old?

Pheres seeks to screen his cowardice by the nove gestion that dying by substitute is itself a cowardl When the funeral procession, including the Choru

ithdrawn, the Steward comes forward to give vent to ie irritation he may not show in the presence of his rd's guest; the cause of this irritation, Hercules, fol- ws — the Hercules now of comedy, jolly banqueter ho puts all serious thought aside while the moment of laxation lasts. But in time his suspicions are aroused, id he forces the truth from the Steward. We see the mic transformed into the tragic Hercules, as his mind kes in the friendly deceit, and how he has been out- one in generosity by his friend: some worthy requital ust be found, and he will not shrink from a wrestle ith Death himself. As the funeral procession returns ie Chorus seek to console Admetus, and use the argu- ent that if he has suffered the common bereavement he as gained by it nothing less than a life. The word jars pon Admetus: he declares he has not gained but lost, id displays the contrast of Alcestis in honor and at st, while for himself and his household is the widowed fe, and the new touch of bitterness in the cruel miscon- ruction of the situation which his father's words have iggested. The Chorus can only strike the note of te and inexorable necessity. Then there is one more terruption of Admetus's mourning, and another de- and for hospitable graciousness, as Hercules reënters, ith a veiled woman, whom he describes as a prize won a notable wrestling match, and proposes to leave her his friend's house. But now that Hercules knows hat has happened, Admetus appeals to him: his house now no place for youth and beauty. Always thought- l for others, even the humblest, Admetus turns to the eiled woman, to soften down his apparent inhospitality;

but a fancied resemblance to the figure of Alcestis brings a complete breakdown. At last Hercules lifts the veil and shows the restored Alcestis. All is happiness again; and the last word of Hercules, as if the moral of the whole story, is, —

See thou reverence strangers.

Yet this simple drama has been completely misread by Browning, who usually shows the deepest insight into Greek life and art.[1] It is true Browning does not directly render Euripides' play: he has created a charming frame for the story, in the incident of the Greek girl Balaustion, captured by pirates, and describing a performance of the *Alcestis* to win her release. But Browning, or Balaustion, whichever the reader pleases, has seen in the story nothing but a wife undertaking to die in place of her husband; and our first thought in such a case will be the selfishness of the husband who accepts such a sacrifice. Balaustion, as she proceeds, amplifies and condenses, reads between the lines and insinuates, until there is nothing left in the story but the selfish husband, who however in the latter part of the action rises out of his selfishness, and so becomes worthy of the restoration worked out for him by Hercules. Now, such a view of Admetus is in flat contradiction to every line of Euripides' poem. All the personages of the drama — Apollo, representing the gods; the Chorus, who stand for public opinion and for the impression the

[1] I have discussed this question in pages 111–116 of my *Ancient Classical Drama;* also, at full length, in a Paper on *Balaustion's Adventure as a beautiful misrepresentation of the original*, published in the Transactions of the Browning Society of London (1891: No. lxvii).

poet wishes to leave upon his audience; Hercules, himself the self-sacrificing toiler for mankind — all look up to Admetus as the ideal of sublime generosity. The modern reader's mistake is in seeing a wife's sacrifice of herself for a husband where the Greek audience would see a subject sacrificing herself for the king, and so for the state; the foundation principle of Greek ethics was that individuals existed only for the state. There is no discussion of this in Euripides' poem, because the idea is taken for granted. Such expressions as "chance," "abrupt doom," "destiny," "appointment of the Gods," "necessity," are applied to the situation of Admetus needing to die by substitute; the sole question with the personages of the plot is, who the substitute is to be. And here again is a difference between the ancient and modern point of view: all through the drama it is assumed that the aged parents, not the youthful wife, would be the rightful sacrifice; that — on the basis of utility to the state — age cannot presume to rank itself with youth. Of course, Pheres is an exception to all this: but Pheres is the one whom all the personages of the play, including Alcestis herself, regard as shirking in cowardice the glory of self-sacrifice. But there is something more to be said. Browning, at the conclusion of the play, sets himself to reconstruct the story so as to make an Admetus worthy of Alcestis; and the point of his reconstruction is that the new Admetus is representative of a cause, and so the personal nature of the sacrifice is eliminated. But this is just what Euripides' play contains: the great ideal of Hospitality is summed up in Admetus; and

the foundation, the turning-point, the consummation of the action are all made to rest upon enthusiasm for the hospitable spirit of the king of Pheræ, until (as we have seen) the cue for the curtain is the maxim of reverence for strangers.

In his preoccupation with the thought of a sinner rising out of his sin Browning has missed the more beautiful motive which does underlie Euripides' poem. The hospitality of Admetus belongs to the brightness and glory of life, which made the main religion of the Greeks, but which falls into the background in modern life. Our sympathies go out to Alcestis, because domestic love is our great ideal. But Euripides, one of the central points of world literature, is the anticipator of modern in ancient life: his handling of the play has the effect of making our modern ideal of love gradually vanquish the ancient ideal of glory. In the earlier part of the action the thought is all for Admetus, and the glorious house saved by the noble sacrifice of Alcestis. But soon the doubt begins to arise, Is this gain or loss? The doubt spreads, and spreads, until in the return from the funeral Admetus's speech brings out how all gain and glory have gone, and love fills the whole field. Then only may the feat of Hercules restore the harmony: brightness and love are united, the public state and the personal bond.

If Browning misreads, much more Alfieri; powerful delineator of character and passion in general, the Italian dramatist has no insight into Greek life. As little does he understand the conventions of the Attic stage: instead of the subtle suggestiveness of the choral func-

tion in Greek drama what we have is merely the chorus of Italian opera. The drama of *Alcestis the Second* is an eminently successful piece of poetic whitewashing, where in reality no whitewashing is required; the dramatist reconstructs Euripides' story with a view of saving the character, not of Admetus only, but even of Pheres. Admetus is lying at the point of death, and a messenger has been sent to seek counsel from the Delphic oracle: Alcestis schemes to intercept the messenger on his return, is the first to hear the oracle of death by substitute, and that instant makes the irrevocable vow that the substitute shall be herself. In reference to Pheres, Alfieri brings out the beautiful point that the old father, on the very brink of the grave, is bound to his equally aged wife by the same obligation which binds Admetus and Alcestis: but for this, or if Death would take both, how gladly would he have been the victim! The difficulty of this reconstruction is with the personality of Admetus; it is hard to give tragic dignity to one who is forced by the action into so passive a position, helpless recipient of sacrifices made without his knowledge by others. Through a succession of powerful scenes Admetus is tossed from passion to passion; Alcestis dying has to rally her powers to strengthen her husband in the living that is harder to him than death. When Hercules enters, Alcestis has not yet breathed her last: the hero orders her couch to be transported into a neighboring temple while he essays the task of salvation. Admetus, already on the verge of distraction, misunderstands the absence of the body; he seeks to stab himself, and then, held back by main force, he utters an oath that no food

shall pass his lips — the oath shall be as irrevocable as it is impossible for Alcestis ever to return to this earth! Hercules enters with a veiled woman, whom he offers to his friend as another Alcestis. The figure behind the veil hears the wild protests against the possibility of an equal for Alcestis, hears repeated the terms of the strange oath. Then the veil is lifted, and the tumultuous happiness ensues. The Italian dramatist has attained his purpose: but meanwhile the whole significance of Euripides' story has been changed, and the drama has been made into a character problem.

'Twas all the work
Of the Celestials. Them it pleased, Admetus,
That thou shouldst unto death be sick, that thus
Free course might to Alcestis' noble virtue
Be given; and it also pleased the Gods
That thou, believing she was dead, shouldst show
Thy love immense by that most fearful oath
That thou wouldst not survive her.[1]

From William Morris, as might be expected, comes a most original and powerful version of the Alcestis Story. At first indeed it might seem that the difference between this and the other versions was only the difference between epic and dramatic form. Classical drama is shut up to the presentation of a single final situation; in epic narrative it is natural to go back to the beginning of things. So in this case: we have related at length the first coming of the divine guest to the house of Admetus; we have further — what does not appear in Euripides' play even in allusion, but is known from other sources —

[1] From the translation of E. A. Bowring (below, page 483).

the strange wooing of Alcestis, who, in accordance with an oracle, may be won only by a suitor driving to fetch her in a chariot drawn by lions and wild boars. But in reality the difference goes far beyond form. The centre of gravity of the whole story has been shifted: the dominant motive is changed, and, when we come to the crisis of the action, we are made to see that the self-sacrificing spirit even of an Alcestis is an idea that admits of enhancement.

The foundation upon which the whole story rests is the love of Apollo for Admetus, of an immortal god for a mortal: it seems natural for the god to seek for his friend the supreme gift of immortality. But this idea clashes with what is a fundamental thought running through the poetry of William Morris — the idea that death is the great sweetener and quickener of life. *The House of the Wolfings* has this for its main motive. An immortal loves a mortal warrior, and when danger comes gives him the enchanted garment that will ward off death; as he wears it in the battle he finds himself losing his manhood, he feels himself more and more sundered from his fellows who are nobly staking their lives on every stroke; finally he casts off the enchantment and dies with glory, the wood-nymph vainly lamenting the impassable gulf that must separate mortal and immortal. In the *Earthly Paradise* the ode to March gives clear expression to the idea: it has sung the joy of being alive at this beginning of Spring, and proceeds —

> Ah, what begetteth all this storm of bliss
> But Death himself, who crying solemnly,
> E'en from the heart of sweet Forgetfulness,

Bids us "Rejoice, lest pleasureless ye die.
Within a little time must ye go by.
Stretch forth your open hands, and while ye live
Take all the gifts that Death and Life may give."

So in the present story, Apollo desires to give the gift of immortal life: but for Admetus to receive the gift will it mean gain or loss?

In melodious flow of verse we have described the strange experience of a god in contact with the life of this lower earth. Apollo yearns for the beauty of this new world, yet realizes that he cannot "feel the woes and ways of man," nor enter into the cares of mortals.

Why will ye toil and take such care
For children's children yet unborn,
And garner store of strife and scorn
To gain a scarce-remembered name,
Cumbered with lies and soiled with shame?
And if the gods care not for you,
What is this folly ye must do
To win some mortal's feeble heart?
O fools! when each man plays his part,
And heeds his fellow little more
Than these blue waves that kiss the shore
Take heed of how the daisies grow.

Yet Apollo gives to his host and friend all that he desires. He listens with eager and bright visage when Admetus tells his tale of love and despair: Apollo can put on his godship and work the miracle that wins Alcestis for his friend. But the unnoticed slight of Diana in the wedding festivities brings a portent of horror at the moment Admetus is entering the bridal

chamber. It must not be supposed that Admetus shows any cowardice at this point: unarmed as he is he lifts bare hands against the monster, but is waved back by a sign from Alcestis — she is in no danger unless he interferes, for the purpose of the monster is not to slay but to separate. Admetus can only "lie like a scourged hound" outside the threshold until morning, when he can invoke the assistance of his divine herdsman, who listens to the story —

> As one who notes a curious instrument
> Working against the maker's own intent.

Admetus is becoming more and more dependent upon his supernatural comrade, more and more separated from ordinary men. And when the year of Apollo's servitude comes to an end, he takes leave of his friend with a hint of yet a greater gift that may be possible, if he shall be summoned in the hour of need. When Apollo is gone, Admetus "seems to have some share in the godhead he had harbored"; war, fame, the ordinary ambitions of mortal men, have no incitement for him; a vague hope gleaming before his eyes makes Admetus great-hearted and wise, and he rules as in a golden age of bliss like the careless bliss of the gods.

But the crisis comes, and Admetus finds death staring him in the face. We can see the change which time and association with the immortal have wrought in Admetus. Fresh from the winning of Alcestis his words of her had been: —

> A little time of love, then fall asleep
> Together, while the crown of love we keep.

How different it is now!

Love, 'twixt thee and me
A film has come, and I am fainting fast:
And now our ancient happy life is past;
For either this is death's dividing hand,
And all is done, or if the shadowy land
I yet escape, full surely if I live
The god with life some other gift will give,
And change me unto thee. . . .
Alas, my love! that thy too loving heart
Nor with my life or death can have a part.
O cruel words! yet death is cruel too:
Stoop down and kiss me, for I yearn for you
E'en as the autumn yearneth for the sun.
O love, a little time we have been one,
And if we now are twain, weep not therefore.

But there is the token which is to summon Apollo: the arrows are burned in incense, and amid the cloudy vapor husband and wife lie side by side awaiting the god, who comes to them as if in dream. He tells the oracle of conditioned escape from death: but there is now a strange addition to the conditions.

For whoso dieth for thee must believe
That thou with shame that last gift wilt receive,
And strive henceforward with forgetfulness
The honied draught of thy new life to bless.
Nay, and moreover such a glorious heart
Who loves thee well enough with life to part
But for thy love, with life must lose love too,
Which e'en when wrapped about in weeds of woe
Is godlike life indeed to such an one.

That which makes a difficulty for the ordinary version of Alcestis' sacrifice here finds recognition in the defini-

tion of the sacrifice itself; further, beyond the giving up of life for Admetus is opened up a higher sacrifice still — to give up love with life, that utter fidelity may be maintained.

But how is all this to be worked out in the progress of the story? To Admetus the words of the god "seemed to cleave all hope as with a sword"; not for a single moment does his mind entertain the thought of such a sacrifice. —

On the world no look Admetus cast,
But peacefully turned round unto the wall
As one who knows that quick death must befall.

Alcestis, lying beside him, misunderstands this gesture of silent despair, and thinks he is waiting for her to do her part — waiting, for of course no man could ask in words such a sacrifice. This momentary misunderstanding makes the strange conditions of the oracle possible. Wild thoughts pass through the brain of Alcestis: her love is killed, but her wifely fidelity is left.

Ah, how I trusted him! what love was mine!
How sweet to feel his arms about me twine,
And my heart beat with his! what wealth of bliss
To hear his praises! all to come to this,
That now I durst not look upon his face,
Lest in my heart that other thing have place,
That which I knew not, that which men call hate.
O me, the bitterness of God and fate!
A little time ago we two were one;
I had not lost him though his life was done,
For still was he in me — but now alone
Through the thick darkness must my soul make moan,

For I must die: how can I live to bear
An empty heart about, the nurse of fear?
How can I live to die some other tide,
And, dying, hear my loveless name outcried
About the portals of that weary land
Whereby my shadowy feet should come to stand.

With morning Admetus rises from his bed in full vigor: Alcestis lies dead. Yet, in the surrendering her soul to the process of dying, before the final moment had come, it seems that the cloud of misunderstanding had lifted, and Alcestis had realized the truth as to her husband.

Yet still, as though that longed-for happiness
Had come again her faithful heart to bless,
Those white lips smiled, unwrinkled was her brow,
But of her eyes no secrets might he know,
For, hidden by the lids of ivory,
Had they beheld that death a-drawing nigh.

What then is to be the end of the story? There is no Hercules to intervene. Admetus, escaping death, moves among his subjects as a god. There is reverence for Alcestis also, yet it is but like the silence in midst of the feast when there is memory of slain heroes.

But Time, who slays so many a memory,
Brought hers to light, the short-lived loving Queen;
And her fair soul, as scent of flowers unseen,
Sweetened the turmoil of long centuries.
For soon, indeed, Death laid his hand on these,
The shouters round the throne upon that day.
And for Admetus, he, too, went his way,
Though if he died at all I cannot tell;
But either on the earth he ceased to dwell;
Or else, oft born again, had many a name.

Such immortality as a god could bestow fades, at best, into a cloudy tradition. The immortality which a self-sacrificing death has won for Alcestis lasts in the hearts of men as long as poetry shall endure.

The *Golden Legend* presents an analogous story in Christian surroundings. We have, not exactly a wife dying for her husband and king, but a maiden, in the end to become wife, offering herself for her feudal lord and benefactor. And the essence of the story is preserved: in real life all around us women are giving their lives for those they love, but what makes the individuality of the story we are considering is the formal compact to die, which raises the difficult question of the acceptance of such a compact by him whom it is intended to save. What makes the distinction of the present version is that the poet has plunged his story into the very heart of the Middle Ages. The essential incidents of Elsie and Prince Henry make only a fraction of the whole poem; the rest is filled with the institutions and incidents and sentiments of mediæval life, with all its mysticism and otherworldliness. The poem is like a work of art made up of a small picture in the centre, and around it copious scroll and border and framing, all of it harmonious and suggestive. Only when we have saturated ourselves with the mediæval atmosphere of the poem does the story which is its kernel cease to seem forced and unreal.

The form of the poem is interesting. It might be called a Wandering Drama, in which the epic and dramatic spirit seem blended. The whole of the poem is, formally, cast in dialogue, and thus far is dramatic.

But in place of the single fixed scene, or interchange of a few fixed scenes, usual in drama, we find the incidents dispersed in a succession of scenes, especially those of the long journey to Salerno, which suggest the progression of epic movement.

The prologue strikes the keynote of the whole poem. We have Strasburg Cathedral — itself a mediæval poem; round its famous spire tempest is raging, and, as part of the tempest, Lucifer and his demon hosts are seeking to tear down and destroy. It is in vain: the sacred bells are sounding their protective spells; and the rhythm of the chimes is beautifully made to suggest another poetic glory of mediævalism — the great Latin Hymns. This starting-point of Lucifer and his hosts prepares us for the transformation that is to be made in the story we are tracing; the dominant note will no longer be the sacrifice of an Alcestis, but the temptation of an Admetus. The *Golden Legend* falls into the class of stories of which *Faust* is the great type: what it gives us is The Temptation of Prince Henry.

The opening of the action presents a noble personality brought to face extinction of life in its mid career, with the slow agony of hopeless disease. No oracle is required; the remedy of blood flowing from a willing maiden's veins is scarcely an exaggeration of the strange nostrums of mediæval medicine. But this exists simply as a piece of passive knowledge in the brain of Prince Henry. The movement commences when Lucifer appears, in the garb of a travelling physician, and offers the sufferer his wonderful catholicon: this is the Arabic Alcohol, the artificial life which, while the spell lasts,

fills the human frame with fullest vigor. There is of course the reaction, with its shame and penance; but meanwhile the momentary taste of full vitality in the midst of decrepitude has brought up that thought of a cure from the depths of Henry's consciousness, and made it a persistent idea. Now the other side of the action is presented. By his disease an outcast from society, the Prince is received in a humble country household, —

> A holy family, that make
> Each meal a Supper of the Lord. —

Elsie, daughter of that family, is at the moment of adolescent life at which childlikeness mingles with deepening womanhood, a time when the erotic and the spiritual influences are indistinguishably blended. The food on which her spirit is fed is the exquisite sacred legends of the Middle Ages — stories of the Monk Felix, of the Master of the Flowers; she has visions and strange dreams; what to others are distant objects of faith are to her near realities. It is a fine stroke of poetic art that the first proposal of the sacrifice of life — which to the critical reader is the great crux in the construction of the story — is made to slip from the lip of Elsie as a simple matter of course.

> *Gottlieb.* — Unless
> Some maiden, of her own accord,
> Offers her life for the life of her lord,
> And is willing to die in his stead.
> *Elsie.* I will!

It all seems quite natural to the simple girl, living in her atmosphere of otherworldliness.

The Saints are dead, the Martyrs dead,
And Mary, and our Lord; and I
Would follow in humility
The way by them illumined! . . .
Christ died for me, and shall not I
Be willing for my Prince to die?

Later on Henry says to her: —

To me the thought of death is terrible,
Having such hold on life. To thee it is not
So much even as the lifting of a latch;
Only a step into the open air
Out of a tent already luminous
With light that shines through its transparent walls!

Meanwhile Prince Henry, struggling against the persistent idea of maiden sacrifice, has sought to purge his soul by aid of the Confessional, the great fountain-head of all mediæval ethics. But Lucifer has usurped the place of the absent priest: with the authoritative casuistry of the Church the temptation is transformed into a sanctioned duty. The difficult first step in a story of temptation is won: not the purposing of the deed, but the entertaining of the idea. Henry at the end of the action declares he had never meant more than to put the girl's courage to the proof: we take his word only so far as to understand that he dallied with the temptation, letting himself drift nearer and nearer to the goal, in his weakness waiting irresolute until some shock should give him vigor to accept or forever renounce.

We now have the long journey to Salerno, the middle phase of the action, which, in stories of this type, makes the main bulk of the poem. Two purposes are being

served. There is the mutual influence of the leading personages: by contact with saintly purity Henry is being lifted out of his selfishness; the simple Elsie by daily intercourse with a cultured mind is being broadened and elevated. And the picture is being loaded with mediæval detail, necessary to make the proper atmosphere of the story. We have cathedrals, supreme gift of the Middle Ages to art; quaint mediæval sights and customs; minnesingers and crusaders; miracle plays that read the most naïve realism into sacred scenes, mystic expositions, and astrological speculations. We have the monastery and convent, with their strangely contrasted inhabitants: here lazy monks, with sensual pleasures and festal hilarity; there the sacred artist of the scriptorium, the abbot with his sense of awful responsibility, the broken lives seeking the truce and rest of the cloister. Swiss scenes, with dances of death and devil's bridges, lead to scenes of Italy, as the blessed Mary's land, or to the sea, made spiritually suggestive. We have processions of pilgrims, with their strange mingling of faith and adventure; scholasticism, with its fighting doctors and challenges to interminable disputing over hair-splitting trifles. And as a link binding all together we have Lucifer, with all the vim and rollicking humor of the mediæval devil, forever appearing in new forms, making himself all things to all men, yet keeping a wary eye upon the two distinguished victims he is invisibly escorting to Salerno.

Here the crisis is reached. It is Lucifer in disguise as a Doctor of Salerno who receives the travellers; to him Prince Henry makes his hesitating explanation, irreso-

lute to the last. By quick movement Elsie is conveyed within. Then only does the soul of Henry come to itself: the shock of sudden loss has brought the burst of passionate strength with which he breaks through the door, struggles with the demon, — and, in the scuffle, accidentally touches the sacred bones of St. Matthew! Mediæval faith in relics takes the place of the labors of Hercules. The wedded bliss which opens the other versions makes the close of this. Last of all, the epilogue supplements the prologue, and brings the miscellaneous matter of the poem into unity again as a story of temptation. It is now the Recording Angels who are seen ascending to heaven. The Angel of Good Deeds closes his book with every record; the Angel of Evil Deeds keeps his book open to the last moment of day, in hope that repentance may erase the record, as here it has been erased. Beneath them the great agent of temptation is seen as a gigantic shadow sweeping into the night.

It is Lucifer,
The son of mystery;
And since God suffers him to be,
He, too, is God's minister,
And labours for some good
By us not understood!

I pass to another group of works for comparative reading, this time with only brief suggestions. I would put together the *Bacchanals* of Euripides, the biblical *Ecclesiastes*, the *Rubaiyat* of Omar Khayyam, the Legend of Temperance which makes the second book of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, and Tennyson's poem

entitled *The Vision of Sin*. Four out of the five have an obvious, but somewhat superficial, common ground in the topic of intemperance, or at least the wine we associate with intemperance; this however is lacking in *Ecclesiastes*. To get a basis of interrelationship we must go deeper.

The *Bacchanals*, as it is one of the most splendid, is also one of the most difficult of poems. In the fine translations of Way and of Milman it is easy for the English reader to appreciate the beauty of the lyrics, the magnificent stage spectacle, the horror of the catastrophe. But what is the general drift and significance? We recognize the strange feature of ancient life by which the excitement of vinous elation is deified in Bacchus, and here surrounded with all the adjuncts of religion; over against this, in Pentheus, we have the conservative morality which resists excess. But what are we to say as to the relation between these two factors? It is vain to say, as is sometimes urged, that the representative of temperance departs from his position when he consents to accompany the stranger to the Mænad revels; it is equally vain to make Agave the heroine of the play, and in her see intoxication awakening to the havoc it has unconsciously committed. Careful reading of the scenes makes clear that the consent to accompany Dionysus is not a slipping from principle, but a mesmeric infatuation, which the all-powerful god has been holding all the time over Pentheus until the resistance to his godship is complete. And in the soliloquy of the prologue Bacchus himself tells us that the intoxicating spell is being sent by his omnipotence upon

Agave and her sisters, in revenge for their slight of his claims to divinity. The explanation of the action is to be sought in the due conception of what tragedy means. The sinner overwhelmed with terrible retribution, this is not tragic enough to satisfy completely Greek tragedy. The supreme tragedy is when an Œdipus, wise and pious, is led by his wisdom and piety into moral horrors; when an Antigone must choose between unfaithfulness to the state and unfaithfulness to the family tie; when an Orestes must either be the slayer of a mother or a recusant to the avenging of a father, when he obeys the oracle of Deity only to become thereby the helpless victim of Destiny. So in the present case: the action of the *Bacchanals* brings Religion and Morality into deadly opposition, and both are involved in a common ruin. The tragedy of this play is the dramatization of a moral chaos.

From this point of view we can feel a certain relationship between the literary works of our group. In *Ecclesiastes* also there is the thought of a moral chaos: to the eye of wisdom all attempts to read meaning into the universe break down, and "all things are vanity." The difference is that here the thinker takes sides with God; although in the appearance of things the righteous equally with the wicked is the victim of an inscrutable Providence, yet without question it is well with those who fear God. In the *Bacchanals* sense pleasure, intensified to ecstasy and deified, was seen in antagonism with morality, with a resultant moral chaos. In the poem of Omar Khayyam sense excitement on its purely mental side is made the one self-

sufficing certainty of the universe; in contrast with this ideas of the Divine are but hypothesis, moral and material interests are a delusion. In Tennyson's *Vision* we have sense excitements, which are but for a moment, and an awful Divine purity which is eternal. The blank verse making the main thread of the poem is at two points interrupted by verse of a different order: first, we have the whirl of passion presented lyrically with the underlying image of the fountain; later, stanzas of cynical song express the broken debauchee's consciousness of a hollow life. Thus sense, intensified to passion, is made to react in exhausted sense craving for passion; this is set over against eternal Divine purity, with a forlorn possibility of hope for the ruined life heard in a tongue which no man can understand. In Spenser's poem we have temperance and intemperance in all their possible forms. But the scope of the work is entirely changed: we have no longer questionings of the sum of things and the meaning of the universe, but the struggle of everyday life. Universal Pleasure, on the one hand held in restraint, on the other hand militant against Unrestraint, is made a field for the development of Good.

Or the relationship of the different works may be put more simply, in the light of their literary form. The *Bacchanals* is tragedy of the most tragic order: a chaos of the universe is seen, with Deity in conflict with morality. *Ecclesiastes* is philosophic meditation: the chaos of the universe is recognized, but the thinker takes refuge with God. The *Rubaiyat* is a lyrical meditation: exalted consciousness of the chaos in the

universe is a jubilant certainty. Tennyson's poem is a Vision: Deity and Moral Order are beheld in harmony, with a fringe of mystery extending into an infinite future. The Legend is an epic poem: problems of life have no place here, but — in the spirit of modern pragmatism — the universe is seen in the process of making, and the struggle is to reconstruct it for the better.

From the Semitic and the Aryan literatures come two poems which have the same title, The Song of Songs, and the same character as songs of the honeymoon. For the outer form of the Hebrew Song of Songs I assume the setting of the poem as it is edited in the Modern Reader's Bible. By the Indian Song of Songs I mean what mediating interpretation has given us under that title in the poetry of Sir Edwin Arnold.

The Hebrew Song of Songs is transparently simple in its human interest. It is not — in the arrangement indicated above — a continuous drama, but a series of lyric idyls; and underlying these is a beautiful story. King Solomon, visiting the royal vineyards upon Mount Lebanon, comes by surprise upon the fair Shulammite maiden, who is sister to the keepers of the vineyards. She flees in terror; Solomon, smitten with her beauty, wooes her in disguise as a shepherd of her own rank in life, and wins her love; then he comes in royal state and invites her to his throne; they are being wedded in the royal palace at Jerusalem as the poem opens. Parenthetic refrains recur to keep before us the idea of conjugal love: the songs them-

selves present disconnected snatches of the story. We have youthful love in its natural setting of Spring scenery, with a humorous interruption as the harsh voices of the Brothers break in with a cry of foxes in the vineyard, and all must run to the rescue. We have the dreams of the Bride, happy and troubled dreams; the raptures of the Bridegroom; the journey in the state chariot; at the close, the longing of the country Bride for her Lebanon home, and the fresh surrender of her heart to her husband on the very spot where first she saw him. What may be a stumbling-block to the unwary reader, the warmly colored picturing of personal charms, is simply the unfamiliar symbolism of Oriental poetry; its riddling and conventional comparisons, which, unlike western imagery, paint no pictures on the imagination, enable symbolic poetry to handle topics excluded from the poetry of the west.[1] The spirit of the Hebrew poem is pure conjugal love, which may be a basis for a secondary and spiritual interpretation, if spiritual interpretation is required. The purity is the more strikingly impressive as we have here the love of heart for heart rising out of an atmosphere of the harem and Oriental luxury.

There are threescore queens,
    And fourscore concubines,
    And virgins without number:
My dove, my undefiled, is but one;
    She is the only one of her mother;
    She is the pure one of her that bare her.

[1] The Introduction to the Song of Songs in the Modern Reader's Bible discusses this difficult matter.

universe is a jubilant certainty. Tennyson's poem is a Vision: Deity and Moral Order are beheld in harmony, with a fringe of mystery extending into an infinite future. The Legend is an epic poem: problems of life have no place here, but — in the spirit of modern pragmatism — the universe is seen in the process of making, and the struggle is to reconstruct it for the better.

From the Semitic and the Aryan literatures come two poems which have the same title, The Song of Songs, and the same character as songs of the honeymoon. For the outer form of the Hebrew Song of Songs I assume the setting of the poem as it is edited in the Modern Reader's Bible. By the Indian Song of Songs I mean what mediating interpretation has given us under that title in the poetry of Sir Edwin Arnold.

The Hebrew Song of Songs is transparently simple in its human interest. It is not — in the arrangement indicated above — a continuous drama, but a series of lyric idyls; and underlying these is a beautiful story. King Solomon, visiting the royal vineyards upon Mount Lebanon, comes by surprise upon the fair Shulammite maiden, who is sister to the keepers of the vineyards. She flees in terror; Solomon, smitten with her beauty, wooes her in disguise as a shepherd of her own rank in life, and wins her love; then he comes in royal state and invites her to his throne; they are being wedded in the royal palace at Jerusalem as the poem opens. Parenthetic refrains recur to keep before us the idea of conjugal love: the songs them-

selves present disconnected snatches of the story. We have youthful love in its natural setting of Spring scenery, with a humorous interruption as the harsh voices of the Brothers break in with a cry of foxes in the vineyard, and all must run to the rescue. We have the dreams of the Bride, happy and troubled dreams; the raptures of the Bridegroom; the journey in the state chariot; at the close, the longing of the country Bride for her Lebanon home, and the fresh surrender of her heart to her husband on the very spot where first she saw him. What may be a stumbling-block to the unwary reader, the warmly colored picturing of personal charms, is simply the unfamiliar symbolism of Oriental poetry; its riddling and conventional comparisons, which, unlike western imagery, paint no pictures on the imagination, enable symbolic poetry to handle topics excluded from the poetry of the west.[1] The spirit of the Hebrew poem is pure conjugal love, which may be a basis for a secondary and spiritual interpretation, if spiritual interpretation is required. The purity is the more strikingly impressive as we have here the love of heart for heart rising out of an atmosphere of the harem and Oriental luxury.

There are threescore queens,
    And fourscore concubines,
    And virgins without number:
My dove, my undefiled, is but one;
    She is the only one of her mother;
    She is the pure one of her that bare her.

[1] The Introduction to the Song of Songs in the Modern Reader's Bible discusses this difficult matter.

The Indian Song of Songs is different: it is devotional poetry, presenting an allegory of earthly and heavenly love, coming as a spell of salvation for those who listen. The personages are divine; yet even a divine lover may lapse into longings for the lower and earthly love. In place of parenthetic refrains we have the parenthetic interruptions of the poet — always in their own special metre — who makes the spiritual application of all that is told. Blank verse carries forward the thread of narrative; the songs themselves are in lyric measures that change with every fluctuation of thought, the sense of dance movement being never lost. There is a dramatic background of moonlight: it is only when the weary night has worn away and clear morning breaks that the irresolute Krishna returns to his divine love. The festal ceremonies of the now united lovers are followed to their close; the English poet drops the curtain as the nuptial bower is entered.

> Then she, no more delaying, entered straight;
> Her step a little faltered, but her face
> Shone with unutterable quick love; and — while
> The music of her bangles passed the porch —
> Shame, which had lingered in her downcast eyes,
> Departed shamed . . . and like the mighty deep,
> Which sees the moon and rises, all his life
> Uprose to drink her beams.

It is hardly necessary to point out that the comparative attitude of mind has application to the most diverse treatments of literary material, from the simplest to the most elaborate. It is good to read

side by side, where nothing is done beyond the mere reading, such works as *Everyman*, in which the naïve simplicity of mediæval devotion rises to the sublime, and the *Pilgrim's Progress*, in which the same naïve simplicity is applied to the popular theology of Puritanism. It is good to follow the story of Cleopatra as it is shaped by three of the greatest masters in poetry — Shakespeare, Fletcher, and Dryden.[1] Or literary tasks of much more extended scope offer themselves. The original Germanic stock in time broke into two diverse branches, one in central Europe, the other moving to the Scandinavian north-west; in the freedom of floating poetry the common poetic inheritance would undergo widely different modifications, especially as Icelandic poets were largely cut off from intercourse with their kindred in the south. A great epic tradition belongs to the original Germanic stock, to which our nearest approach is the poem of the *Nibelungenlied*. Of this original material the later German modification and the Norse modification have, in our own day, found two great masters of reconstruction: the one has been worked up by Wagner into the musical tetralogy of the *Nibelung's Ring*, the other in the hands of William Morris has become the epic of *Sigurd the Volsung*. The detailed study of the original form, and of the two modern reconstructions, would carry com-

[1] The reference is to Dryden's *All for Love, or the World well lost*, and to the tragedy in the works of Beaumont and Fletcher entitled *The False One* (of which the exact authorship is doubtful). The authors of this last play, in the Prologue, disclaim common ground with Shakespeare's play: yet it makes an interesting side light, so far as Cleopatra is concerned.

parative reading to a high degree of literary suggestiveness.

I will add only one word of caution, which I should wish to put with all emphasis possible. In laying stress on Comparative Reading I have no idea of recommending comparisons of merit. I am well aware that the current treatment of literature, whether popular or formal, is full of discussions of comparative excellence, of blemishes and faults in poetry. For myself, I hold the unfashionable opinion that judicial estimates of literature are the greatest of obstacles in the way of literary insight. It is easy enough, when some element in the literature we are studying does not fit in with our personal tastes, to dispose of it as a fault or inferiority in the poet. The true course is to study further, until the apparent unharmonious element is seen to modify our conception of the whole scheme, and so our taste has become enlarged. Likes and dislikes and preferences are natural enough in application to things of art, as they are natural in application to things of nature; but we do not in our appreciation of flowers, or of landscape, examine whether a carnation or a geranium is the higher, or pick out faults in the configuration of mountain scenery. Our attitude to poetry should be the same as our attitude to nature. Only by sympathy and a receptive attitude of mind will Comparative Reading lead us to true literary appreciation.

CHAPTER VIII

LITERARY ORGANS OF PERSONALITY: ESSAYS AND LYRICS

LITERATURE is both objective and subjective: objective, in that poetry presents things; subjective, in so far as books are the revelation of their authors. The literature with which we have so far dealt has been mainly objective in its character, but the other type has its place in world literature. The tendency, indeed, is to give it too much prominence: a vast number more people are interested in poets than in poetry. The two interests can be felicitously blended: notably in the writings of Sainte-Beuve and Dowden. But if we consider literary study in general, both private reading and formal education, it is a matter of regret that so large a part of it is switched off the true course on to biographical and similar lines. It seems to have become an accepted canon that we must know about a writer, his surroundings and the circumstances under which he produced a work, before we may get at the work itself; text-books of literature tend to be accounts of producers, not of products; questions of editions and textual details must further intervene between the reader and the literature he wants to read. Of course, there is a place for all these things somewhere in the field of scholarship; but the unbalanced char-

acter of literary study brings it about that of those who desire to know literature a large percentage are, by this biographical and bibliographical distraction, kept in the outer precincts and never reach the literary goal at all. Yet the instinct of the general reader is a sound one: it is the high function of literature to bring us in contact with the best minds. But this should be sought, not through external histories, but by aid of special types of literature, consecrated to this purpose of revealing the personality of authors, with a revelation that is itself as literary as the mind revealed. And these types of literature are chiefly two: Essays and Lyrics.

Like so many other literary terms, the word "Essay" is used in different senses. We even have such a case as that of Locke, who, with a modesty veiling a sense of achievement, has called a ponderous body of exact science an Essay on the Human Understanding. But the reader will have no difficulty in distinguishing the more natural use of the word. Precise definition is not practicable for a thing constituted by absence of precision. But it is clear that where a writer has sought to be exhaustive, and has followed a formal and methodical treatment, he will naturally call the result by some such name as "treatise." The Essay, in the proper sense of the term, has for its central interest the personality of its author, and in form it is distinguished by perfect freedom, with full scope for thinking that is tentative and fragmentary. It is a succession of thoughts upon a single topic: but even the topic need not be a binding limitation, and the general term

Essay can be stretched to include disconnected *pensées*, thoughts, fragments of meditation. The Essay is the point at which literature approaches nearest to discursive conversation.

The evolution of this literary organ of personal revelation is more easily traced in world literature than in any single national field. We have the Hebraic root of essay literature in biblical wisdom, more especially the *Book of Ecclesiasticus*. Wisdom is the general meditation upon life, before that meditation, becoming a conscious investigation, takes on formal method and is called philosophy. Thus wisdom starts naturally with proverbs and similar fragmentary sayings. I have traced elsewhere[1] the genesis in wisdom literature of the essay out of the primitive proverb. First we have the reign of proverbs, units of thought in units of form, and collections of these. Then some arrangement comes in, so far as to make the proverb cluster, several proverbs put together under a common topic, such as the king, or the fool. The topic is the foreshadowing of the title of the essay. The separate proverbs of a cluster gradually draw together, the stiffness of the aphorism yielding to flow of style; in the much quoted phrase of Stanley, the closed fist of the Hebrew gnome relaxes into the open palm of Greek rhetoric. This makes the essay, but even in this we may distinguish stages: between the essay that is a simple unit, and that into which has come so much of organic form as we express by division into paragraphs. All this process can be abundantly illus-

[1] *Literary Study of the Bible*, pages 298–306.

trated within the *Book of Ecclesiasticus.* But this book has a further interest for us: while it is the largest collection of wisdom, yet it is a collection made entirely by one man, and the underlying personality makes itself felt. In what may be called a preface we are given to understand, though in veiled language, how the quiet scholar was at one crisis dragged into the glare and noise of public notoriety, and was wonderfully delivered after running in danger of his life. We can gather how the whole of his life is devoted to the collecting of wisdom from others, and the augmenting what he gathers by his own thinking; how his materials grow upon him, and book is added to book; his intended rivulet becomes a sea; he is a grape-gatherer gleaning after other grape-gatherers; when he adds a fourth book, he is filled as the moon at the full. There is progressive self-revelation through these books. The first is the general wisdom of the humanist; the second identifies the author with Israel, and wisdom with the Law of Moses. At the close of the third book, in a masterpiece of essay eloquence, the writer stands fully revealed as a Scribe, profoundly conscious of the wisdom of leisure, separated by an impassable barrier from the practical wisdom to which "the handiwork of its craft is its prayer." As the fourth book opens, we seem to see advancing years in the plaintive essay on the Burden of Life, and the sonnet on Death, so acceptable to "extreme old age" that is "distracted" and "losing patience." Further, if we read a little between the lines, we seem to find a conservative thinker struggling against the growing scep-

ticism all about him; never himself swerving from his firm faith, yet forced to modify from time to time his statement of it as a man accustomed to meet objectors. This miscellany of wisdom, in fragmentary forms, and revealing the underlying personality of the collector, makes the point of departure for the coming essay literature. With *Ecclesiastes* we are passing beyond the essay; its separate parts are drawn into a unity by prologue and epilogue, and wisdom is changing into philosophy.[1]

The *Book of Ecclesiasticus* brings us naturally to the great masterpiece of modern wisdom, the Essays of Lord Bacon. It is only necessary to place side by side the titles of essays in *Ecclesiasticus* as they appear in the Modern Reader's Bible, and the titles of Bacon's essays, to show how much there is in common in the general scope of the two works, though of course the books will have other matter special to their distinctive eras.

Ecclesiasticus

True and False Fear — Honour to Parents — On Meekness — Consideration for High and Low — True and False Shame — Friendship — Household Precepts — Adaptation of Behaviour to Various Sorts of Men — Wisdom and Government —

Bacon's Essays

Of Truth — Of Death — Revenge — Of Adversity — Of Simulation and Dissimulation — Of Parents and Children — Of Marriage and Single Life — Of Envy — Of Love — Of Boldness — Of Atheism — Of Counsel — Of Delays — Of Wisdom for a

[1] Part of this paragraph is taken from my article on "The Personality of the Son of Sirach," in *The International Journal of the Apocrypha* (January 1907).

Ecclesiasticus (Continued)

Pride and True Greatness — Prosperity and Adversity are from the Lord — Choice of Company — Niggardliness — On Free Will — No Safety for Sinners — On Taking Heed in Time — Against Gossip — The Steadfast Friend and the Uncertain — Retribution and Vengeance — On the Tongue — On Lending and Suretiship — On Health — On Riches — On Feasting — On Dreams — On False Friends — On Counsel and Counsellors — On Disease and Physicians — The Wisdom of Business and the Wisdom of Leisure — the Burden of Life — On Death — etc.

Bacon's Essays (Continued)

Man's Self — Of Seeming Wise — Of Friendship — Of Expense — Of the True Greatness of Kingdoms and Estates — Of Regiment of Health — Of Suspicion — Of Discourse — Of Riches — Of Ambition — Of Nature in Men — Of Custom and Education — Of Fortune — Of Youth and Age — Of Beauty — Of Deformity — Of Followers and Friends — Of Studies — Of Faction — Of Ceremonies and Respects — Of Praise — Of Vain-Glory — Of Honour and Reputation — Of Anger — Of Vicissitude of Things — etc.

Bacon represents the highest point to which the literature of the essay has ever attained. And this is because of the greatness of the personality that is revealed. It is altogether a mistake to exalt Bacon as the founder of modern philosophy: he is rather the last of the wise men, before wisdom has specialized into philosophy. His is the wholeness of view that belongs to what is distinctively wisdom. Breadth of intellect in him is balanced by depth of character — for the traditional "meanness" of this "wisest and brightest" of mankind rests upon a superficial and hostile interpretation of his conduct under peculiarly trying circumstances, which disappears before modern

and fuller investigations.[1] It is unnecessary to add that in Bacon powers of expression are adequate to the power of thought. He knows how to stop at the point of suggestiveness: he thus appears both wise himself and the cause of wisdom in others. In biblical wisdom a considerable proportion of the detailed sentences is made up of actual proverbs which have floated down the ages; Bacon has no need of this help, for he has the rare epigrammatic faculty that can coin universal proverbs for itself.

On account of the modifications which essay literature was soon to undergo, very few writers can be classed as belonging to the school of Bacon. The most considerable of these is Owen Feltham, whose essays are entitled *Resolves*, a title intended as indication of their close connection with conduct, and reflecting the eminently religious tone of Feltham's writing. As this once popular book is not at the present time well known, I may be permitted to cite one of the briefer and quainter essays.—

Sanctity is a Sentence of Three Stops

A Christian's voyage to heaven is a sentence of three stops: comma, colon, period. He that repents is come to the comma, and begins to speak sweetly the language of salvation: but if he leaves there, God understands not such abrupt speeches: sorrow alone cannot expiate a pirate's robberies: he must both leave his theft, and serve his country, ere his prince will receive him to favour. It is "he that confesses, and forsakes his sin," that "shall find

[1] A simple explanation of this matter will be found in Dr. Aldis Wright's Introduction to Bacon's *Advancement of Learning* (Clarendon Press).

mercy": it is his leaving his wickedness, that is as his colon; and carries him half way to heaven. Yet here also is the clause imperfect, unless he goes on to the practice of righteousness, which as a period knits up all, and makes the sentence full. Return and penitence is not sufficient for him that hath fled from his sovereign's banner; he must first do some valiant act, before, by the law of arms, he can be restored to his former bearing. I will not content myself with a comma; repentence helps not, when sin is renewed: nor dare I make my stay at a colon; not to do good is to commit evil, at least by omission of what I ought to do: before I come to a period, the constant practice of piety, I am sure, I cannot be sure of complete glory. If I did all strictly, I were yet unprofitable; and if God had not appointed my faith to perfect me, miserable. If he were not full of mercies, how unhappy a creature were man!

The nineteenth century has seen, in two conspicuous cases, a reversion to the Hebrew starting-point of essay literature. The *Proverbial Philosophy* of Martin Tupper is biblical wisdom, diluted, and become rhapsodic. The prefatory introduction is suggestive in this connection. —

Thoughts, that have tarried in my mind, and peopled its inner chambers,
The sober children of reason, or desultory train of fancy;
Clear-running wine of conviction, with the scum and the lees of speculation;
Corn from the sheaves of science, with stubble from mine own garner:
Searchings after Truth, that have tracked her secret lodes,
And come up again to the surface-world, with a knowledge grounded deeper;
Arguments of high scope, that have soared to the keystone of heaven,
And thence have swooped to their certain mark, as the falcon to its quarry;

The fruits I have gathered of prudence, the ripened harvest of my musings,
These commend I unto thee, O docile scholar of wisdom,
These I give to thy gentle heart, thou lover of the right.

What, though a guilty man renew that hallowed theme,
And strike with feebler hand the harp of Sirach's son?
What, though a youthful tongue take up that ancient parable,
And utter faintly forth dark sayings as of old?
Sweet is the virgin honey, though the wild bee have stored it in a reed,
And bright the jewelled band, that circleth an Ethiop's arm;
Pure are the grains of gold in the turbid stream of Ganges,
And fair the living flowers, that spring from the dull cold sod.
Wherefore, thou gentle student, bend thine ear to my speech,
For I also am as thou art; our hearts can commune together:
To meanest matters will I stoop, for mean is the lot of mortal;
I will rise to noblest themes, for the soul hath an heritage of glory:
The passions of puny man; the majestic characters of God;
The feverish shadows of time, and the mighty substance of eternity.

The purpose of self-revelation is made clear enough; but criticism has not found the personality revealed sufficiently attractive. Writing as full of euphuism as the above extract is sure of a wide hearing with the general public; there is, moreover, a great deal of true wisdom in the *Proverbial Philosophy.* Walt Whitman is a poet of another order. Here we have a strong and deep personality, with a most original viewpoint for the universe; if to express one attitude to the world of things we use the term "pantheism," we might coin the word "pan-anthropism" to suggest the spirit of Walt Whitman's poetry. Both these writers, in their different spheres, have revived the parallelism of biblical

wisdom, and Whitman has shown its immense capacity for the expression of the most modern thinking. That criticism has found the poetic form of these writers a stumbling-block is, I take it, one of the many evidences that our higher education has lost touch with the Hebrew root of our culture.

In the Hellenic source of our world literature the Essay appears less marked and less influential. In Greece it was at a very early period that wisdom changed into formal philosophy. The Romans had their attention engrossed with Greek philosophy; moreover, in Latin prose the oratorical impulse soon nullified other variations of literary tone. Cicero's famous works on Old Age and on Friendship, and the writings of Seneca, are at least approaches to essay literature. And we have two great masters of wisdom in Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius. One of those to whom we are indebted for the "Discourses" of Epictetus writes: —

> Whatever I heard from his own mouth, that I tried to set down in the very same words, so far as possible, and to preserve as memorials for my own use, of his manner of thinking, and his frank utterance. These Discourses are such as one person would naturally deliver from his own thoughts, *extempore*, to another; not such as he would prepare to be read by others afterwards.

Arrian's explanation offsets the suggestion of the title "Discourses," and brings the matter of Epictetus home to us as revelation of a personality. There is no need to dwell upon the way in which the Meditations of the Emperor Marcus Aurelius have constituted a golden book of wisdom to all sorts of readers in subsequent

ages. As counterpart, in modern peoples, to classical wisdom and philosophy of every-day life, we may instance the maxim writers of the French, especially La Bruyère and La Rochefoucauld, or the Spanish Gracian in his *Art of Worldly Wisdom*. On one of the former Sainte-Beuve remarks: —

> The great and simple things were early said: the ancient moralists and poets drew and grasped human nature in its chief and broad outlines: they seem to have left to the moderns only the discovery of details and the grace of refinements. La Rochefoucauld escapes this almost inevitable law, and, in these delicate and subtle matters, he, who had not read the ancients and was ignorant of them, obedient only to the direct lights of his mind, and to the excellence of his taste, has, in his best passages, attained, sometimes in the expression and sometimes in the idea itself, a sort of grandeur.

Collections like the *Table Talk* of Luther, or of Selden, or what Ben Jonson expresses by the title *Timber*, belong to this group. And we may mention the *Thoughts* of Pascal. All that reveals so interesting a personality has value for us, yet these stand apart from the other works of the group, in the degree of their fragmentariness: in the fact that large part of them seem studies or notes, intended to be worked up in different form in the future.

From the classical side comes the first stream of modifying influence upon essay literature. No book has a better right to a place in world literature than Plutarch's *Lives*. This, in the original or in its translations, served as the great intermediary between the ancient and the modern world; writers of the Renaissance, Shakespeare at the head of them, drew from

Plutarch their conceptions of Greek and Roman history and life. In its form, Plutarch's work would be classified as history or biography; yet modern historians or biographers would hardly go to Plutarch as a first-rate authority. The real importance of the book, making it an epoch in literary history, is the immense impetus it gave to interest in personality, of which the essay is so largely the vehicle. Not personality only, but comparative personality, is the subject of Plutarch's book. The Lives are arranged in pairs, of a Greek and a Roman personage, each pair followed by a third article comparing the two. We have a life of the Greek Aristides, of the Roman Cato, with a comparison of the two; similarly, the two great orators Demosthenes and Cicero are separately treated and then discussed side by side; we have the Greek Nicias and the Roman Crassus, and then an argument making one the counterpart of the other; in a single case we have four lives — of Agis, Cleomenes, and the two Gracchi — and an argumentative grouping of all four. Thus, all the force of the comparative method is utilized to open up a new branch of thought in Personality. Ethics and psychology are one thing, dealing with human nature as a whole, and analyzing its elements: quite another thing is this interest of Personality, the particularized distribution of the elements of human nature in the characters of different individuals. The words of Plutarch himself, in the introduction to the Life of Paulus Æmilius, seem to give us the new interest of personality rising out of the older interest of history.

When I first applied myself to the writing of these Lives, it was for the sake of others, but I pursue that study for my own sake; availing myself of history as of a mirror, from which I learn to adjust and regulate my own conduct. For it is like living and conversing with these illustrious men, when I invite as it were, and receive them, one after another, under my roof: when I consider *how great and wonderful they were,* and select from their actions the most memorable and glorious.

North's translation of Plutarch appeared in 1579: it will be noticed how this comes near to the beginning of our greatest dramatic era, when character painting in the highest sense was represented by Shakespeare, and exaggerated features of personal character, with their stock name of "humours," were the interest of Ben Jonson and the comic stage. Somewhat later we have the highly specialized section of essay literature that deals with types of personal character, of which the main representatives are Overbury's *Characters* and the *Microcosmography* of Bishop Earle. The latter is a masterpiece. Its very title is suggestive: the older wisdom dealt with human nature as a whole, but now each single individual is a microcosm, with a psychological geography of its own. The new interest of personality appears clearly in the lists of character types, as compared with the titles of Baconian or other essays.

A Child — A young raw Preacher — A grave Divine — A meer dull Physician — An Alderman — A discontented Man — An Antiquary — A younger Brother — A formal Man — A self-conceited Man — A Reserved Man — A Shark — An old College Butler — An Upstart Knight — A down-right Scholar — A young Gentleman of the University — A Pot-Poet — The common Singing-Men — A Pretender to Learning — A Tobacco seller — A plau-

sible Man — The World's wise Man — A She-precise Hypocrite — A Sceptic in Religion — A plodding Student — An University Dun — A stayed Man — etc.

This book is so little read at present in proportion to its importance in our subject, that I am impelled to illustrate the bright insight and epigrammatic grace of Earle. Let us see his treatment of a human life at its two ends. —

A Child

is a Man in a small Letter, yet the best Copy of Adam before he tasted of Eve, or the Apple; and he is happy whose small practice in the World can only write this Character. He is nature's fresh picture newly drawn in Oil, which time and much handling, dims and defaces. His Soul is yet a white paper unscribbled with observations of the world, wherewith at length it becomes a blurred Note-book. He is purely happy, because he knows no evil, nor hath made means by sin to be acquainted with misery. He arrives not at the mischief of being wise, nor endures evils to come by foreseeing them. He kisses and loves all, and, when the smart of the rod is past, smiles on his beater. Nature and his Parents alike dandle him, and tice him on with a bait of Sugar, to a draught of Wormwood. He plays yet, like a young Prentice the first day, and is not come to his task of melancholy. His hardest labour is his tongue, as if he were loth to use so deceitful an Organ; and he is best company with it when he can but prattle. We laugh at his foolish sports, but his game is our earnest: and his drums, rattles and hobby-horses, but the Emblems, and mocking of man's business. His father hath writ him as his own little story, wherein he reads those days of his life that he cannot remember; and sighs to see what innocence he has outlived. The elder he grows, he is a stair lower from God; and like his first father much worse in his breeches. He is the Christian's example, and the old man's relapse: the one imitates his pureness, and the other falls into his simplicity. Could he put off his body with his little Coat, he had got eternity without a burden, and exchanged but one Heaven for another.

A good old Man

is the best Antiquity, and which we may with least vanity admire One whom Time hath been thus long a working, and like winter fruit ripened when others are shaken down. He hath taken out as many lessons of the world, as days, and learn't the best thing in it, the vanity of it. He looks o'er his former life as a danger well past, and would not hazard himself to begin again. . . . The next door of death sads him not, but he expects it calmly as his turn in Nature: and fears more his recoiling back to childishness than dust. All men look on him as a common father, and on old age for his sake as a reverent thing. His very presence and face puts vice out of countenance, and makes it an indecorum in a vicious man. He practises his experience on youth without the harshness of reproof, and in his counsel is good company. He has some old stories still of his own seeing to confirm what he says, and makes them better in the telling; yet is not troublesome neither with the same tale again, but remembers with them how oft he has told them. . . . You must pardon him if he like his own times better than these, because those things are follies to him now that were wisdom then: yet he makes us of that opinion too, when we see him, and conjecture those times by so good a Relic. He is a man capable of a dearness with the youngest men; yet he not youthfuller for them, but they older for him, and no man credits more his acquaintance. He goes away at last, too soon whensoever, with all men's sorrow but his own, and his memory is fresh when it is twice as old.

The whole of essay literature is enriched by the influences represented in works of this kind. The essays do not cease to reflect the personality of their authors; but the whole interest of human personality has been lifted on to a higher plane.

The second great stream of influence upon the essay comes from modern European literature, in the writings of Montaigne. Bacon, Montaigne, and Addison make

three great masters in this division of the literary field. In this new development the self-revelation that belongs to the essay is no longer unconscious: Montaigne writes to pour himself out upon paper, though in the most unpremeditated fashion possible.

> This fagotting up of divers pieces, is so oddly composed, that I never set pen to paper, but when I have too much idle time, and never any where but at home; so that it is compiled at several interruptions and intervals, as occasions keep me sometimes many months abroad. As to the rest, I never correct my first by any second conceptions. I peradventure may alter a word or so: but 'tis only to vary the phrase, and not to destroy my former meaning. I have a mind to represent the progress of my humour, that every one may see every piece as it came from the forge.

If we may believe him, all in Montaigne that is really important is kept out of his writing: —

> Such as I am, I will be elsewhere than in paper: my art and industry have been ever directed to render me good for something; and my studies, to teach me to do, and not to write. I have made it my whole business to frame my life. This has been my trade and my work. I am less a writer of books than anything else. . . . Who has anything of value in him, let him make it appear in his manners, in his ordinary discourses, in his courtships and his quarrels, in play, in bed, at table, in the management of his affairs, in his œconomy. Those that I see make good books in ill breeches, should first have mended their breeches, if they would have been ruled by me.

But the personality of one who has made it his whole business to frame his life is likely to be worth knowing; and besides this the form of the essay, always distinguished by freedom, receives immense enhancement by Montaigne's discursive mode of revealing himself, in

flashes, in fragments hot from the forge. The essay now reaches the intimacy of monologue conversation.

When we consider the expansion of essay literature which all this suggests, and its spontaneous simplicity, we might be inclined to expect that writing of this kind would become the dominant form of literature, outdistancing other forms in productiveness. That the course of literary history has been different from this is due to the peculiar characteristics of what makes the next great stage in the evolution of the essay. This is found in such collections as the *Tatler* and *Spectator*, with writers like Steele and Samuel Johnson and Oliver Goldsmith, and above all, Addison. Here we have essay writing of supreme excellence, and highly typical of the form. The reader cares not a straw what may be the particular topic which Addison may be discussing at the moment; the interest is in the personality of Addison, equally attractive upon whatever it may be flashing, from *Paradise Lost* to feats of yawning and whistling.

But there are two special features of this group of essays which have an important bearing upon the future of the literature of personality. One is that we now get essays, roughly speaking of the same length, appearing daily or at short fixed intervals. In this periodical appearance there is a departure from the full freedom of the essay and its accidental and spontaneous impulse. The periodical tendency grows and becomes more imperious, until essay literature finds itself drawn into the machinery of periodical writing, and produces the magazine article, or even associates itself with the newspaper and its daily purveying of news and criticism of current

events. Thus to a large extent essay writing passes out of regular into floating literature: the floating literature made by printing facilities at the end of literary evolution, corresponding to the other floating literature at the beginning of things made by the absence of writing. Here is a vast field for the treatment of the great human interest of personality; it is no longer personality in the individual sense, but such interest of human nature as is shared in common between a band of anonymous writers and an army of indiscriminate readers.

But a second important feature of the *Spectator* is the element of creative story which it develops. We have seen how, in the romance age, the multiplication and aggregation of stories brought about the frame story which was to introduce the rest. So here, something of a frame story comes into the *Spectator*. The very title "Spectator" is suggestive: of a silent man, haunting all the clubs and public places, never opening his lips, but taking note of everything to pour it out in the daily essays. But this is not enough: the Spectator must have his own particular club, and all its personages need presenting. There is Sir Roger de Coverley: great type of the English baronet, hunter, justice of the peace. He has passed through the usual spirited youth; the perverseness of a widow in the next county keeps him a bachelor all his life, although, if she would but have listened to his suit, "upon her wedding day she should have carried on her head fifty of the tallest oaks upon his estate; . . . he would have given her a coal-pit to keep her in clean linen, he would have allowed her the profits of a wind-mill for her fans, and would have presented her once in three

years with the shearing of his sheep for her under petticoats." There is Captain Sentry, Sir Roger's nephew and heir. There is a literary barrister, who knows Aristotle and Longinus better than Littleton or Coke; and a modest clergyman who is among divines what a chamber councillor is among lawyers. Sir Andrew Freeport is a great London merchant; there is not a point in the compass but blows home a ship in which he is an owner. Will Honeycomb represents the man about town, great on fashions: "He knows the history of every mode, and can inform you from what Frenchwoman our wives and daughters had this manner of curling their hair, that way of placing their hoods; and whose vanity to show her foot made that part of the dress so short in such a year. . . . Where women are not concerned, he is an honest worthy man." Mingling with the miscellaneous topics of the essays we have kept before us the sayings and doings of these worthies, and of others whom they introduce. At last this thread of story comes to be wound up. Sir Roger is found to have "lost his roast-beef stomach," and takes to his death-bed, amid the tears of all around, and not without a kind message at last from the widow. Captain Sentry leaves town to take the estate. Sir Andrew leaves business to set his spiritual affairs in order for the close of life. Will Honeycomb succumbs to the attractions of a country girl on his own estate, and marries, confessing that he has been eight-and-forty these twelve years. The Club is gone, and the Spectator has to face the question of making a new one.

Slight as all this may seem, it has importance in lit-

erary history. In this association of miscellaneous essays with a creative frame story we may see the embryo of the modern novel. Of course, the term "novel" covers the most diverse literary types. But that which we have in mind when we speak of the "modern English novel" seems to be created by the fusion of the essay and the story. In this it contrasts, for example, with the epic stories of Scott, or the stories of the *Decameron* type, or the modern short story, and many other varieties. If we take two highly typical authors of the modern English novel, George Eliot and George Meredith, we can see the two elements all through running side by side, harmonious, and yet separable for analysis. In these two authors, the discussional matter of life and personality, and the actual incidents of the story, are about in equal proportions. And this makes the immense importance of this form of literature. Instead of being dispersed in separate essays, the novel allows thinking upon human affairs and individual personality to be brought into direct contact with created types of incident and personal development; there is the same advantage that science has when its exposition is intermingled with experimental illustration. With this great organ of expression open to it, it is not surprising that, in our times, the personality of authors is attracted to the novel rather than the essay, and pours out its feelings on universal and on current topics in a medium in which self-revelation blends with creative revelations of other life.

But all the while that essay literature has been drawing in the two directions of the newspaper or magazine

and the novel, the original type has continued, and enlarged itself to modern conditions of the literary world. Three great masters of the essay stand out in modern times: Macaulay, Emerson, Sainte-Beuve. And the writings of these authors gain the fullest appreciation when they are put into the category of essays, and considered as revelations of the supremely interesting personalities they reflect. If the essays of Macaulay are presented as scientific criticism, they drop at once in value. They regain their full value when they are accepted, not as science, but as literature; the mind of Macaulay playing upon any topic cannot but be excellent literature, though it may be very doubtful criticism. And the designation of essay may enlarge to take in writers not usually described as essayists. In this light, surely, we should look upon Carlyle and Ruskin. I do not, of course, refer to particular works like the *Modern Painters*, or the *Cromwell's Letters and Speeches* ; but in the general writings of Carlyle and Ruskin, which have attracted such large circles of readers, we may see the revelation of the author as the force of attraction. And the essay in this sense may easily coalesce with other literary forms. What are we to say in reference to Carlyle's *French Revolution?* If we put it into the class of histories, other histories will find it strange company. Shall we call it a prose epic? or is it a gigantic essay? But literary classification is not the subject before us. However we may deal with the term "essay," the study of human personality, and especially the self-revelation of an author's personality, will always constitute a leading division of world literature.

In the poetic side of literature we find a branch specially devoted to the expression of personality, and a medium for the self-revelation of an author. It is what we usually mean by the term Lyrics. The adjective "lyric" describes one of the three main divisions of poetry: this will include lyrics of the stage, hymns, and occasional pieces like epithalamia, and other literature that is objective rather than subjective. But ordinary usage seems to reserve the noun "lyrics" for poems of a subjective spirit; songs and fugitive pieces which are the expression of a poet's moods, or the crystallization of a passing fancy. Lyrics in this sense have always been the delight of the cultured reader, and are the verse analogue of essays in being the medium through which the personality of the author reveals itself to the reader. From Hebrew literature we have the Book of Psalms; this of course is a miscellaneous collection in which every type of lyrical poetry finds representation, but no psalms are more important than those meditations in which poetry is made the confidant of devotional feeling. Classical poetry is full of lyrics: one particular work, the Odes of Horace, has attained a central place in the literature of the cultured man. It adds to the usual attractions of lyrics the special interest in the personality of a Horace underlying such varied pieces; and we may even say that the collection as a whole embodies a certain fixed attitude of mind to the external world. Besides these ancient classics there are the numerous collections of lyrical poems, from *Tottel's Miscellany*, which presented Elizabethan England as a nest of singing birds, to the Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* of our own

day. Some of the greatest of poets, notably Shelley and Browning, appear at their best in this medium of expression.

Side by side with the free variety of such lyrics, we have one highly specialized form, a creation of modern poetry, in the Sonnet. In a looser sense this term may be used of literature of any age where form seems to determine matter.[1] But in the modern acceptation of the word the Sonnet is created by the Italy of Dante and Petrarch, though eagerly adopted — not without modifications of detail — by English poets. This Sonnet is accepted specifically as the lyric of self-revelation. How it has attracted our leading poetic minds has been expressed by a great master of this form in the well-known lines of Wordsworth.

Scorn not the Sonnet; Critic, you have frowned,
Mindless of its just honours; with this key
Shakespeare unlocked his heart; the melody
Of this small lute gave ease to Petrarch's wound;
A thousand times this pipe did Tasso sound;
With it Camöens soothed an exile's grief;
The Sonnet glittered a gay myrtle leaf
Amid the cypress with which Dante crowned
His visionary brow; a glow-worm lamp,
It cheered mild Spenser, called from Faery-land
To struggle through dark ways; and, when a damp
Fell round the path of Milton, in his hand
The Thing became a trumpet; whence he blew
Soul-animating strains — alas, too few!

[1] I have ventured to claim this term for biblical literature in my *Literary Study of the Bible*, pages 306–15 (compare page 521); more briefly, in the Modern Reader's Bible, page 1457.

In one respect the sonnet seems to differ widely from other lyrics of self-revelation, and from their prose counterpart in the essays, that here instead of freedom in form we have the strictest constructive model. But though to the reader who is no poet himself, or at best is conscious of being a poetaster, such strict form seems a limitation, yet it is one of the paradoxes of literary composition that the poet who has once mastered technique finds in technique an inspiration. This has been said for us, in sonnet form, by Wordsworth himself.

Nuns fret not at their convent's narrow room;
And hermits are contented with their cells;
And students with their pensive citadels;
Maids at the wheel, the weaver at his loom,
Sit blithe and happy; bees that soar for bloom
High as the highest Peak of Furness-fells,
Will murmur by the hour in foxglove bells:
In truth the prison, unto which we doom
Ourselves, no prison is: and hence for me,
In sundry moods, 'twas pastime to be bound
Within the Sonnet's scanty plot of ground;
Pleased if some Souls (for such there needs must be)
Who have felt the weight of too much liberty,
Should find brief solace there, as I have found.

From the same poet comes an exquisite expression of the spirit of this poetic type.

Happy the feeling from the bosom thrown
In perfect shape (whose beauty Time shall spare
Though a breath made it) like a bubble blown
For summer pastime into wanton air;
Happy the thought best likened to a stone
Of the sea-beach, when, polished with nice care,
Veins it discovers exquisite and rare,

Which for the loss of that moist gleam atone
That tempted first to gather it.

So closely is the sonnet associated with the expression of individual sentiment that it has been humorously described as an apartment for a single gentleman in verse.[1] Yet the history of the sonnet shows a stage somewhat analogous to that by which individual essays drew, in the *Spectator*, into a connected frame story. This is the stage of the Sonnet Sequence: not of course the loose connection of poems with allied subjects, like the Ecclesiastical Sonnets of Wordsworth, but the series of sonnets which, though each is complete in itself, yet suggest an underlying story, the phases of which they are supposed to express. The *Vita Nuova* of Dante combines the story, in prose, with sonnets expressing its different parts; or sonnets (and kindred poems) stand by themselves, such as those of Petrarch celebrating his Laura. Especially we have the great poetic mystery of Shakespeare's Sonnets, still in dispute. It seems scarcely possible to question that the succession of these sonnets conveys a story, or rather, two stories which may or may not be one. The only real question is whether the poet himself is the hero of the story, or whether even here the great dramatist is dramatizing a revelation of some other soul.

But detailed discussion of these forms is not here in place. The point is that Sonnets and similar Lyrics in verse, and Essays in prose, should be recognized as the natural medium through which the cultured reader

[1] Gummere, *Beginnings of Poetry*, page 145.

seeks access to the mind and heart of the great masters of literature. Biography leads us outside the boundaries of literature into other fields; what is wanted is not external description of an author, but his own self-revelation; not even his revelation of himself in commerce with the ordinary world, but the self-revelation of his literary moods, which will naturally find expression in literary forms. World literature offers these literary revelations in abundance. I do not attempt to frame any list: it is for the reader to invite his own company. The sole point of this chapter is that Essays and Lyrics constitute a literary organ of intimacy between author and reader.

CHAPTER IX

STRATEGIC POINTS IN LITERATURE

THE expression "world literature" is apt to suggest something impracticably vast: to be attempted only by those who have special literary capacity, with a lifetime to devote to the study. This impression is a thing to be resisted. The vastness of literature applies to its detail, not to its total impression. The number of the stars is beyond the possibility of counting: yet it is open to every one, by lifting up his eyes, to receive an image of a stellar hemisphere. The only real obstacle in the way of world literature is the indisposition to look for it; an indisposition largely the result of our education, which has taught us to look with blinkers, so to speak — to strain our gaze along single lines, such as the literature in our own language, or in the two or three languages we happen to know, instead of seeking an all-round survey. It is true that the stellar hemisphere, to continue our figure, will impress different images on different minds, according to the point at which the observer stands, and the strength of his vision; and so world literature, as we have seen, will vary in its content for different peoples, or according to different degrees of capacity and attention bestowed on the subject.

Considerations of this kind seem relevant to the point in our study we have now reached. Great part of what has gone before relates to features of world literature which should impress themselves upon all who look from the English point of view. Beyond these there is the widest scope for individual differences of impression; discussion of world literature does not mean a catalogue of works to read, but principles to guide individual choice. A former chapter has discussed one principle that should affect individual choice, the tendency to choose with mental grouping; the comparative reading that instinctively draws together similarities and contrasts from different parts of the literary field. The present chapter is occupied with another principle of choice — the search for strategic points in literature: points in the literary field which are specially valuable for their bearing on the survey of the field of literature as a whole. Of course, any selection of such strategic points in literature will be an individual selection; the purpose is not to prescribe particulars, but to insist upon the tendency to search for what is strategic. I proceed to my list, fully understanding that it will satisfy nobody but myself, while to myself it is only approximately satisfactory. Some readers will exclaim at what is left out; it is for them to supply the omissions. Others perhaps may take alarm at the length of the list. But to these I would point out that it is a great element in literary culture merely to get into contact with the right literature. To know few things and to touch many things is a sound maxim of study: it is no small part of knowledge to know what there is to be known.

I. In the roll of the world's great literary men no name stands higher than that of Plato. Among modern thinkers two opposite attitudes are taken to the works of Plato. By some it will be maintained that his name is almost synonymous with philosophy itself; that, except in the working out of details, which is the province of the modern world, all that is essential in philosophy has been anticipated in the writings of this one man. Others, while doing full homage to the historic importance of Plato, insist that the whole of what he has produced stands outside what the modern world accepts as philosophy. The reconciliation of these opposing views is found in the strategic position Plato occupies in the general field of literature. His date takes us to the time when philosophy had not yet become differentiated from literature. Evolution is to a large extent a succession of differentiating processes, by which newer and more and more specialized pursuits separate themselves from broader fields of which they had formerly made a part; literature is the mother country from which all other studies have migrated. Plato represents Dramatized Philosophy. This does not mean merely that the writings of this philosopher are in the form of dialogue; it would be quite possible to rewrite the works of Kant or Herbert Spencer in dialogue form, without their ceasing to be just the type of philosophy they represent at present. But the works of Plato are dramatic dialogues, of the highest literary force and beauty. The hero of these dramatic dialogues is Socrates: there was a Socrates of real life of whom we form an estimate from the works of unimaginative writers like Xenophon, but the Socrates

who is protagonist in world philosophy is the dramatic creation of Plato. Other personalities mingle with that of Socrates, all worked up by the hand of a dramatic master. The dialogues have their scenic background, and all the play of wit and rapid turns of intellectual encounter that go to make plot. Not only is philosophy at this point undivorced from literature, but literature has not fully committed itself to the most fundamental of differentiations, that between poetry and prose, the literature that is creative and the literature that limits itself to analysis and discussion. In this way the works of Plato cover the whole ground of modern thought; yet what is presented (as previously remarked) is not so much philosophy itself as a dramatization of the thought processes that make philosophy. It is of permanent value to literature, that includes in itself all intellectual pursuits; of varying value, sometimes great, sometimes small, in the restricted field of modern philosophy. The conception of world literature demands some contact with this brilliant source of the river of modern thought, with this literary representative of the greatest of Hellenic personalities. Such works as the *Apology of Socrates*, the *Phædo*, the *Gorgias*, the *Symposium*, with enough of the *Republic* to give idea of its scope and point of view, will at least bring the reader into contact with this supreme literary artist and thinker.

With Plato it is natural to associate Lucretius. The centuries that intervene are no objection: Lucretius, like most Roman poets, is working over a Greek original; moreover, as a general principle, a species of literature

that has once existed can at any future time be recalled by imitation. As Plato is dramatized philosophy, so Lucretius is poetized science. The matter is an attempt to construct the universe on a basis of ultimate indivisible atoms, that has a superficial resemblance to atom theories of modern science, though of course with the fundamental difference that it is pure speculation unsupported by quantitative analysis and experimental research. But this is conveyed with the rhythm and diction of poetry; and the conventions of Latin poetry lead to digressions that give scope for the highest creative power. The detailed system has interest only for the specialist in Latin literature or in the history of philosophy. But some of these digressions — as where sex attraction, the pervading principle of the organic world, finds apotheosis in the invocation to Venus; or where the charms of philosophic thought are compared with the pleasures of the world; especially where we have the enthusiastic acceptance of Death by one to whom beyond Death there is nothing — these give us perhaps the highest point to which Latin poetry has attained.

II. Aristophanes is the most brilliant of poets. And he has inspired the best of translations: in the hands of men like B. B. Rogers and Bartle Frere the original brilliance is not dissipated in the process of englishing. In our present discussion the chief importance of Aristophanes is that he stands at a most interesting point in the history of poetry, representing a critical issue in the development of literature. This is nothing less than the union of serious and comic. In ancient Greece Tragedy and Comedy moved in entirely distinct orbits;

the difference of the two was the difference of spirit represented by the words "serious" (*spoudaios*) and "laughable" (*geloios*). Both had risen out of the primitive art of dancing: the germ of the one was the intricate and intellectual movement of the *chorus;* the germ of the other was the jolly freedom of the *comus.* There was a time when Tragedy in Athens — already in the form of dramatic scenes alternating with lyric choral odes — was a public function, exhibited with great splendor at the expense of the state. Fragmentary historic references suggest how at this time the comic poets, naturally desiring the same state patronage, found no way of obtaining it but by following the routine prescribed to tragic poets, and applying to the authorities for a "Chorus." When their application succeeded they had attained the right of public exhibition, but the Comedy thus to be exhibited was encumbered with the incongruous element of a tragic Chorus — a body of artists trained in the intricate and elevated art proper to the most serious and religious of dramas. Thus Old Attic Comedy, of which Aristophanes is our only representative, follows the structure of Tragedy, dramatic scenes alternating with choral poetry. Of course the Chorus can be burlesqued; instead of a Chorus of Senators, or Matrons, we have a Chorus of Clouds — in gauzy upper garments, with long black trains to represent shadows sweeping over the hills — or a Chorus of Birds with wings and long beaks, or a Chorus of Wasps with stings and slim waists. But however deeply such a Chorus may enter into the broad farce, which makes the Comedy of that period, the choral element always invites

outbursts of lyrical beauty, the most delicate fancies, the most elevated thoughts. And besides the high art of the Chorus there is in the matter of the plays an element making for the serious. Attic comedies might almost be called dramatized newspapers. They were organs of political parties: and it has contributed in no small degree to traditional misconceptions of Greek life that the comic newspapers of only one party have come down to us. The choral odes are often passionate discussions of political topics; the "parabases" resemble leading articles; the dramatic scenes are acted cartoons. So vivid is the workmanship of Aristophanes that the modern reader enters easily into the fun and enjoys the grotesque picturing of life: in the *Clouds*, to see burlesqued Socrates and the New Learning; in the *Birds*, to follow a good-humored parody of current enterprise as a project for fortifying the atmosphere; in the *Lysistrata*, to watch a profusion of choral dances surrounding a strike of women against husbands and lovers in the interests of peace as against war. But with all this human interest goes the further interest of the strategic position occupied by Old Attic Comedy in the history of art: the mixture of tones, union of serious and farcical, elevated and grotesque, newly accomplished almost by accident, in all the vicissitudes of literary history never to be entirely lost.[1]

III. Three works may be named which, taken together, will immerse the reader deep in the literary life of the middle ages. These are the *Romance of the Rose*,

[1] Compare on the whole subject my *Ancient Classical Drama;* page 265, and Chapters VII–IX passim.

Reynard the Fox, and *Everyman*. Allusion has been made in a previous chapter to the last: here we feel the simplicity of mediæval devotion cast its spell over our own distant age. *Reynard the Fox* is the mediæval counterpart of *Æsop* in antiquity; readers interested in story-tracking can see, in Mr. Joseph Jacobs's Introduction to *Æsop*, how the beast epic has prevailed in the varied peoples and periods. The general spirit of the poem may be summed up in a single line of Davenant's:—

We blush to see our politics in beasts.

The crooked ways of human kind, so familiar in real life that we hardly think of them, take on at once a quaint humor by being translated into ways of the animal world. If *Reynard* be read in the translation of F. S. Ellis, with the illustrative devices of Walter Crane, it will fully hold its own with modern books of humor. But the most important of the three is the *Romance of the Rose*. In mediæval poetry love is a religion, and Ovid is its bible; this poetical love in all its length and breadth is comprehended within the long *Romance*. The breadth of treatment is favored by the extraordinary authorship of the work. We are almost reminded of the scene in the old miracle play, where the Almighty for a moment quits the throne of the universe and Satan skips into his place. Guillaume de Lorris opens the poem: a lover, delicate and dainty; in the favorite mediæval form of allegory he sets out to tell the tale, the same in all ages and never wearisome, of youth and maiden love. But his work is unfinished, and Jean de Meun plunges in to continue it: a clerk full to his eyes with miscellaneous learning,

racy and vigorous, with common sense ideas on the relation of the sexes, and the utility of love as a means for the propagation of the species. He does carry on the action, though with such modifications as might make Guillaume de Lorris turn in his grave; he carries it forward only to diverge from it in any direction that promises scope for pouring out his literary learning; from these divergences there are yet digressions, and digressions which seem interminable; when the reader is losing his patience he may find a warning against prolixity.

> Of prolix talk I'd fain keep clear.
> Women are liable to become
> In speech ofttimes most troublesome;
> And in good truth all this I see
> Before my eyes so vividly,
> That since I am of speaking fain,
> I pray you list me once again.

And the flood of learning continues its course as if it had that moment begun. All this means so much more of mediævalism crowded into the poem. We are told [1] that "not less than two hundred manuscript copies of [the *Romance*] have survived the waste of centuries (while of the "Canterbury Tales" no more than fifty-nine are known), and printed editions followed in rapid succession from about 1480 till 1538." In reading the three works, especially the *Romance of the Rose*, the modern reader is thinking the thoughts and feeling the feelings that made the everyday literary life of the generations which intervened between ancient and modern times.

[1] In Mr. Ellis's Prologue.

IV. No persuasion is required in recommending to the reader Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* and Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. But the interest of the two may be enhanced by taking them together: in the first we have mediæval matter vivified by the seriousness of the coming age, in the other we have mediæval matter vivified by modern humor. Chaucer, especially as regards the prologue and the principal tales, has won all kinds of readers. The *Morte d'Arthur* is not so much a poem as a cycle of epic poetry; it represents a source of poetic material for other poets, from Wagner to Tennyson. Here we have mediæval chivalry touched with religious mysticism. We have further the art of narration in a consummate degree, and the author's absorption in his story is infectious. In this connection I am tempted to quote an interesting passage in the *Life of William Morris*.

During this visit to Birmingham Burne-Jones took Morris to Cornish's, the bookseller's shop in New Street, where, in accordance with the leisurely eighteenth-century practice that still lingered in provincial towns, customers were allowed to drop in and read books from the shelves. There Burne-Jones had passed "hundreds of hours" in this employment; and there lately he had found and begun to read a copy of Southey's edition of Malory's "Morte d'Arthur," a work till then unknown to either of the two, and one which Burne-Jones could not afford to buy. Morris bought it at first sight, and it at once became for both one of their most precious treasures: so precious that even among their intimates there was some shyness over it, till a year later they heard Rossetti speak of it and the Bible as the two greatest books in the world, and their tongues were unloosed by the sanction of his authority.[1]

[1] J. W. Mackail's *Life of William Morris*, Vol. I, page 81.

To this may be added the opinion expressed by Mr. Frederic Harrison, that the English of the *Morte d'Arthur* is hardly second to the English of our Bible.[1]

V. I mention as a matter of course the *Faerie Queene* of Spenser. An attempt adequately to characterize this work would need not a paragraph but a volume: a volume which I hope some day to be permitted to write. For the present purpose it is sufficient to allude to its universally recognized position as a common meeting-ground for Classical, Romantic, and Puritan. Spenser has been traditionally called the poet's poet: partly because in him the whole art of poetry (apart from drama) is illustrated in its supreme form; partly again because the world of the *Faerie Queene* is so purely creative, kept throughout at a safe distance from the space and time world of real life.

VI. I would put two works together: Froissart's *Chronicles* and the *Don Quixote* of Cervantes. The first gives us history: but history inspired by chivalry. It is a purely aristocratic conception of life, in which is entirely ignored the "greatest number," whose interests are paramount to our modern democratic spirit, and color our conception of history. On the other hand, *Don Quixote* stands at an interesting point of historic development, when the world of chivalry is passing away and the future world of industry is just rising. A wide range is given to the story by the double movement so common in Shakespeare: with Don Quixote himself, the knight, is forever associated the squire, Sancho Panza. In the first we have the spirit of chivalry bur-

[1] Essay on the "Choice of Books," page 43. [Macmillan.]

lesqued, not without pathos. Side by side with this, Sancho Panza keeps before us the crass common sense of the masses, for whom the world of ideas has no meaning; yet a copious philosophy exists for them in the floating popular proverbs, which perhaps no country has produced in larger numbers than Spain; whole paragraphs of Sancho's speeches are built up of these proverbs dovetailed together. Perhaps there is no more universally recognized world classic than *Don Quixote;* and Mr. Frederic Harrison goes so far as to make it a seriocomic analogue of Dante's poem.[1]

VII. On the threshold of what we call modern life there seem to stand two literary personalities of the highest rank, one with his eyes turned to the mediævalism that is passing away, the other with his face to the world of the future. These are Erasmus and Bacon. Their actual contributions to world literature may not be great in amount, for the main work of their lives was done in special fields; it is as representative personalities that they are literary landmarks. In Erasmus all the sides of the Renaissance meet: he is the typical humanist, and yet the founder of modern New Testament scholarship; when the movement we call the Reformation began to separate itself from the general movement of the Renaissance all parties seemed to turn to Erasmus as the umpire whose adherence might compose the strife. In pure literature Erasmus is known chiefly by two works. One is the *Colloquies.* This sets out to be a Latin Reader for beginners, like the modern school books which construct sentences to

[1] "Choice of Books," page 58.

the effect that Balbus is building, or was building, or is about to build, a wall. In the hands of Erasmus the school book becomes a series of racy dialogues, with plenty of personality and plot; a diversified picture is presented of the age and its ways and customs, and great novelists have pillaged from this school book some of their best scenes. But the masterpiece of Erasmus is the *Praise of Folly*. It is one of the greatest pieces of satire in all literature; yet, totally different from the heavy cuts and thrusts of a Juvenal or Dryden, it reads hardly as satire at all, but rather as delicate sword play of prolonged paradoxical irony. The humor of Erasmus is as modern as the humor of Thackeray. Folly puts on cap and bells, mounts a pulpit, and pronounces a eulogium upon herself, claiming as her votaries all classes, from infants to grave divines; all the varying social types, as society was moulded by mediæval philosophy, religion, learning, pass before us in succession, all seen through an atmosphere which is laughter without bitterness. The book is a confirmation of the principle that, in the right hands, a caricature may paint more truly than a portrait.

Bacon is traditionally accepted as inaugurator of the New Thought: this is our modern thought, the foundation of that science through which, for the first time, man knows the external world in which he has been placed. Yet to make good this description of Bacon we have, as in the case of Plato, to fall back upon the distinction between literature and philosophy. The formal philosophical works of Bacon have naturally become out of date; nor is it in this field that Bacon

is supreme. Others have been more successful expositors and appliers of inductive science. Bacon is the literary representative of the experimental philosophy: he gives us the general mind of man surveying what the narrower philosophic mind will achieve, and realizing for the first time the momentous epoch in human history which the New Thought has made. Similarly, as we have already seen, his *Essays* represent wisdom as distinguished from philosophy. Perhaps this position of Bacon comes out best in his *Advancement of Learning*, that is to say, in the earlier part of the book, before he proceeds to a criticism of detailed studies, which of course has now only an antiquarian interest. Beyond any special writings however of Bacon, the general conception of his personality makes a point for world literature. It is natural to quote here the well-known epigram of Cowley. —

> Bacon, like Moses, led us forth at last;
> The barren wilderness he pass'd,
> Did on the very border stand
> Of the bless'd Promised Land,
> And from the mountain-top of his exalted wit
> Saw it himself, and showed us it.

VIII. From France come the great names of Molière and Racine: how are we to place these dramatists in a general view of our world literature? It seems as if the stars of the literary heavens are often double or triple stars: I mean, that to catch the full significance of some poet, he must be taken in antithesis with others. Such a sidereal triplet may be found in the three, Molière, Shakespeare, Victor Hugo. All are consum-

mate artists in drama, each after his kind. By Molière the ancient conception of comedy is worked out in modern life. As we have had occasion to remark more than once, all Greek and Roman drama is drama of situation. The stage limitations of its origin were never shaken off; ancient plot (if the comparison may be pardoned) was a narrow-necked bottle, which forced the fulness of a story to be poured through a single fixed scene. Of course, this form of action brought advantages of concentration and emphasis to compensate for limitation of matter. Molière accepts this conception of antiquity[1]: but his comedy of situation is applied to our modern life. Plautus and Terence, with all their cleverness of plot, present narrow and worn-out types; the situations of the French dramatist are bright with varied and subtly conceived humors of a fully developed human nature. With Shakespeare it is different: his is romantic drama, that gives full play to the progress of story, and of many stories; human interest can abound, without any special need for emphasizing peculiar situations. Victor Hugo as a dramatist is influenced from opposite sides: on the one hand, he feels the French tendency to drama of situation; on the other hand, as devoted admirer of Shakespeare, and with a temperament overpoweringly democratic, he is attracted in the direction of romance. The result is what may be called the romantic drama of situation: Victor Hugo makes place for enlarged human interest, but he finds it by deepening his situa-

[1] Not of course limitation to a single scene: but his few scenes make a single situation of affairs.

As it appears to me, one name may in this connection be associated with that of Sir Walter Scott: the name of Sienkiewicz. Here we have Romantic Epic, not turned in a variety of directions, but concentrated upon one field — that of Slav mediæval life, a lost star of historic brilliance. To the greater part of English readers Sienkiewicz is known mainly by his *Quo Vadis*, a great story, but one by no means specially characteristic of its author. It is only in his novels of Polish life that the full power of Sienkiewicz is shown, especially the trilogy of the Zagloba Romances — *With Fire and Sword*, *The Deluge*, *Pan Michael*. Here, in the same romantic atmosphere which belongs to the works of Scott, we have the most powerful characterization and passion, and an absolutely illimitable fertility of stirring incident. And as a bright thread running through the whole we have the personality of Zagloba, the only figure that can be put by the side of Falstaff; that is to say, we have here the outside of a Falstaff with a heart of gold. Of course, detailed comparison would be impossible: how can the medium of drama, which concentrates a personality in a few scenes, be set over against the medium of sustained epic, that will spread a similar personality over a long succession of detailed incidents? Zagloba is not the least important element in the Polish trilogy; it thus appears that Romantic Epic, like Romantic Drama, owes great part of its general power to the mixture of tones.

X. One name in the world's literature stands quite by itself: a Peak of Teneriffe in the literary landscape. This is Rabelais. Not that he has not influenced

followers, like Swift; but imitations of Rabelais are of only passing importance, while not to know the original is not to know literature. It will not do to make too much of the satiric profundity which some see in this writer; Rabelais is rather to be approached as a phenomenon of literature, compelling by its extraordinariness. It is a sort of literary inebriety: we have the elephantine gambolling of the highest genius in the field of pure nonsense, with an indecency so colossal as to be harmless. Rabelaisism leads nowhere, and connects itself with nothing, but while it lasts it is as irresistible as a winter torrent. We have here a region of world literature which every traveller needs to visit, while few will wish to stay there long.

XI. From France again world literature gains a double star of the first magnitude: this time in the field of the novel. We naturally put side by side Balzac and Victor Hugo. Both represent the highest creative genius brought to bear upon the delineation of human nature. Balzac was an ardent admirer of Sir Walter Scott: yet no two things called by the same name could be more unlike than the Waverley novels and the novels of Balzac. The name by which the Frenchman described his life work, actual and projected, was *Comédie Humaine*, of course in antithesis to the Divine Comedy of Dante. This Comedy of Humanity was story worked out, not with epic, but with dramatic spirit: its action turning upon intrigue, its motives always pathological. And it is worked out in the real world of French social life. Victor Hugo might well have called his fiction by the name of

Tragédie Humaine. It is a presentation of real life much wider in its range than the life presented by Balzac; comprehending the highest and the lowest social strata, extending beyond the life of France, and beyond the age contemporary with the author. But its great distinction is that it presents real life irradiated with single ideas, ideas which Hugo uses all his sledge-hammer force to emphasize and make as dominant as the idea of Destiny in the tragedy of Greece. In the *Hunchback of Notre Dame* we have society in the grasp of Ecclesiasticism, at a time when the Church is at its full strength; in *L'Homme qui rit*, we have society in the grasp of Aristocracy, the scene laid in aristocratic England before the democratic movement has begun. In the *Toilers of the Sea*, the dominant idea is Labor, as an inspiration and as a tyranny. And *Les Misérables* is dominated by the supreme motive of Sin and Redemption. When we thus bring together Balzac and Victor Hugo, we realize how, in the delineation of human nature, France with its novelists makes a counterpoise to England with its drama.

XII. The approach and actual opening of the nineteenth century shows England leading world literature in a reaction against the conventional poetry that had almost frozen inspiration to death, under the oligarchical influence of Dryden, Pope, and Samuel Johnson. This reaction is represented chiefly by two poets, who are naturally named together by way of contrast — Byron and Wordsworth. Byron rose before Europe with brilliant rush, attracting universal attention, Goethe himself leading the applause: it is a

question whether the image of the rocket must not be carried to completion in his case. Yet the poems of Byron belong to world literature, as embodying one phase of the general reaction: an impulse to escape stagnation at all costs; an impulse often described by the word "demonic"; a movement away from convention, whether it be conventional good or evil, and in any direction, provided only there is a sense of momentum. Wordsworth is totally different: he is represented by the cry, Back to Nature. Nature, perpetual theme of poetry, had, by the wearing thin of the classical tradition, been attenuated with iterations and echoes of echoes, till it had become a mere conventional thing without any reality. Wordsworth seeks contact at first hand with Nature, all traditions thrown aside; with external Nature, and with the humanity that in daily life is closest to Nature. From the English point of view, at all events, Wordsworth is the prophet of External Nature, and the revealer of the sincere and profound sentiment which the visible world can call forth in a sensitive soul, a sentiment which opens a new era for poetic literature.

The literature of our own times I have left almost untouched. Not that it would not have full relevance to the subject of this work: it is a feature of the present age that the leading peoples of the world are drawing nearer to one another, as if making a common reading circle to which the best products of each people will appeal. And the different literatures can produce each its roll of names, for which plausible claims can be

made to the position of great masters. But we are too near them to judge these claims, and to attempt the difficult distinction between what is of local and temporary, and what is of permanent value. With the great body of readers present-day literature may safely be left to take care of itself; there is moreover no lack of well-equipped critics and essayists ready, not only to discuss current literature, but to give the impression that there is nothing else worth discussing. To my own mind, a more serious consideration seems to be the danger that, at the present time, literary taste may divorce itself from literary history. To be thoroughly grounded in the literature of the past, more especially in that perspective view of the past which in this work it is attempted to secure, this makes the best attitude of mind with which to approach the literature of the present.

CHAPTER X

WORLD LITERATURE AS THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF CIVILIZATION

A NATIONAL literature, it is generally recognized, is a reflection of the national history. Literature is much more than a product of the individual. A lunatic — to take the *ad absurdum* degree of individuality — may write a book, and, if he can command funds, may get his book printed and published: but it will take some degree of public acceptance, acceptance at the time or in the future, to convert that book into literature. Books as books reflect their authors; as literature, they reflect the public opinion which gives them endorsement. Thus a national literature as a whole is seen to reflect the successive stages, or accidental phases, through which the history of the nation has passed. And this principle will seem the truer in proportion as our conception of history is more adequate. At first, it might seem as if only certain kinds of literature would serve to reflect national history. Authors are free to take topics remote from their own day and generation; they may, and often do, create for themselves purely ideal worlds. Swinburne, in the nineteenth century, produces dramas in Greek form which read as purely Greek in their matter

and thought as if they were plays of Æschylus or Sophocles; Spenser's *Faerie Queene* depends for its main interest upon the degree in which its incidents are kept at a distance from real life: how, it might be objected, can the *Erechtheus* and the *Atalanta in Calydon* be said to reflect nineteenth-century England, or the *Faerie Queene* the age of Elizabeth? The answer depends upon the idea we hold as to the meaning of history. At a time when feudal conceptions were still strong, history meant dynastic history, and confined itself to the concerns of the reigning families and of those closely associated with them. Then history widened, and became the record of public events in general. It widened further, to take in the manners and customs of a country: instead of the history of England we had the history of the English people. Yet its scope is wider than this, and includes a nation's ideas and tastes. A man's character is not made by what he does only, but by what he loves and hates and wishes; the most important element in the character may be made by the man's unfulfilled aspirations. So it is an important item of English history that a nineteenth-century Englishman was profoundly interested, and could interest those about him, in the Greek point of view of two thousand years before; it is another item of English history that an Elizabethan reading public had strength of imagination to be enthusiastic over idealized shadows. The wider our sense of the historic, the more fully shall we see in a national literature the reflection of the national history.

Now, the principle that is true for the smaller unit

of the nation holds good equally for the larger unit of civilization.

The physical sciences have one advantage over the studies we group together under the name of the humanities: in the physical sciences it is so easy to realize the common ground between them. The geologist, the chemist, the physiologist, the psychologist, with all their differences of field and method, are perfectly aware that they are all studying the same one thing, which they call by some such name as nature. But what is the common ground between the humanity studies? We must not answer, Man: for that brings us into the sphere of sciences like anthropology or sociology. The question is difficult, but perhaps the best answer is that the common object of the humanity studies is Civilization. But if this is correct, then it must be admitted that our humanity studies are organized in a way to defeat their chief aim; they are found to concentrate attention on the surface variations of civilization, and to leave the thing itself almost untouched. Take four neighbor nations, English, French, German, Italian; bring representative men of these four nations together: it will immediately appear that the national distinctions separating the four are infinitesimally small in comparison with the common civilization that binds them together. If they have some means of getting over the practical difficulty of language, then they can converse together with easy community of feeling, to which their national peculiarities do no more than give a flavor of variety. Add to their company a Turk or a Malay: in contact with the strange civi-

lization the first four feel themselves a unit. Yet it is the separate languages with their separate literatures and histories that make the humanity studies: the common civilization is almost entirely left out. The effect is as if, in studying grammar, we were painfully to memorize long lists of exceptions and forget to learn the rules; or as if, in medical art, we were to arrange elaborate systems of instruction separately for the training of expert oculists and expert aurists, while leaving the general physiology and pathology of the human body to be picked up by these oculists and aurists in chance readings of their leisure moments.

The Englishman naturally desires to understand English civilization and culture. But the knowledge of this will not be given him by the history of England. When the land of Britain was invaded by Julius Cæsar, and the English race was so immersed in the darkness of European antiquities that it is difficult to identify it — in other words, when the history of England was in its first faint beginnings — at that time the foundations of English civilization and culture had been laid long before, and the edifice was far advanced towards its completion. A foundation step had been taken centuries and centuries before, when, in the far-off region of Mesopotamia, Abraham had set out on his profoundly original journey of exploration, "to a country that God should give him": a migration to found a race that should be separated from other races, not by geography or ethnology, but by the cherishing of a spiritual instinct which should develop in the course of centuries into a force strong enough

to determine the whole spiritual side of English and kindred civilizations. Again, for centuries and centuries before that opening of English history, another leading element of English civilization had been in progress, when, amid the ripening life of Greek races, competing rhapsodists, and later competing dramatists, filled with poetic enthusiasm, had been unconsciously framing the laws of rhythm and conceptions of what constitutes beauty, such as would eventually mould the taste and literary sense of English and European peoples. In the same remote period, though somewhat later, another stage in the creation of English civilization had been won when Greek sophists, searching into the mystery of the world around them no longer explained by religion, fell gradually into habits of thinking which were destined, eventually, to make for English culture its logical sense and impulse to scientific truth. Some three centuries before that beginning of English history the great crisis in the history of English and European civilization had been passed, when Macedonian conquerors, spreading on all sides Greek language and culture, unconsciously brought about the blending of Hellenic with Hebraic, which determined once for all the quality of human thought and character that should eventually dominate the western world. Before invasions like those of Hengist and Horsa had made a second beginning for the history of England, the structure of English civilization had attained its definite form in the Christianization of the Roman Empire, the interplay of State and Church, of imperial government and clerical culture, by which

the modern world was to be slowly moulded. It is a worthy task of a history to trace the development of English nationality; but nationality is itself a late idea, belonging to the closing stages of mediævalism, and before this the real English culture is the culture of Europe. We hear of the introduction of Christianity into England in one century, of the Norman Conquest of England in another century: what these events mean is that solitary England is by revolution plunged into the life stream of European civilization. Later on, when it can be seen that the English people are strong in national individuality, it yet remains true that the main forces in the progress of their civilization are found outside — feudal courts and their circle of poetic aspirants; streams of traditional story from all quarters pouring in to a Europe that is a literary unity; Saracen civilization coming into rivalry and conflict with a Christian civilization thus led to feel still more strongly its own strength; clerical disputers uniting faith and philosophy in a new logic; clerical poets making an allegorical religion of love; Italian priestcraft playing against German zeal for reform, with renovated Greek learning as a third issue. When the whole area of the history of England has been traversed, nine-tenths of the history of English civilization and culture has been left outside.

Nor can the knowledge of our civilization and culture be attained by any process of simple addition. I suppose that the theory of the humanity studies — if there be a theory — is that we should master our English language and literature, and add to this French

language and literature, to this German, Greek, Latin, and the rest. The programme seems a long one, enough to fill the whole length of an ordinary life. But when this programme has been carried to completion, we have still not really commenced our study of civilization: we have merely been getting our materials together. The civilization and culture in which we make a part can be studied only by a process similar in kind to that which in the present work has been applied to literature. We must take our stand at the point where we find ourselves, and, looking from that point in all directions, we must bring perspective into play: we must distinguish what from our viewpoint is great and what small, what is essential and what less essential, and with such perspective view ever maintained we must bring our constructive powers into action.

Of course, it is the function of history to do all this; history, besides dealing with individual nations or epochs, undertakes to trace for us the development of civilization. But just here the principle comes in which it is the purpose of this chapter to emphasize: namely, that as a national literature is the reflection of the national history, so in world literature is reflected the course of civilization. The literary unit we call the Holy Bible dramatizes for us, as we have seen, the evolution through the ages of those conceptions which are the foundation of our spiritual nature. Greek epics and dramas, not to mention other productions of the Greeks, not only gratify our poetic taste, but are the very instrument by which that taste has been created.

Shakespeare appears before us, not simply as a representative of Elizabethan England — though of course that view of him is interesting — but as a force in civilization, by which the slow accumulations of romance were struck into new life by impact of a dramatizing power imported from the classical east. Mediæval culture, which is part of our culture, is highly complex, full of difficulties and unfamiliarities: in the *Divine Comedy* all that is most important in mediæval culture lights up for us with the illumination of supreme poetic genius. In the history of England, at the moment when the Restoration was a thing accomplished and the nation firmly determined to keep its monarchy, it became a matter of trifling importance whether the man Milton should be hanged as a warning to rebels, or as an extinct force be suffered to live on in obscurity. To civilization it was of prime import that he lived on, and his mind became a powerful reflector, which could catch rays coming from Puritan thought on the one side, and rays from classical form on the other side, and focus them into a clear image by which world literature gained what it could have gained from no other source. When the mediæval unity of Europe breaks up into modern nationalities the history of civilization becomes increasingly complex: we gain assistance from literature when we see some of these national differentiations — English Elizabethanism, Catholic Spain, German culture, nineteenth-century mysticism — obligingly coöperate in moulding the same Faust story to reflect for us their divergent points of view. In the study of world literature we get devel-

oped the comparative habit of mind, which acts as a lens to bring together resemblances and contrasts from all parts of the complex civilization. It is the function of history to lead us by philosophical analysis to the understanding of civilization and culture: world literature is civilization presented by itself.

Hence we may speak of World Literature as the Autobiography of Civilization. For what is autobiography? An individual, wise with advancing years, and at all events old enough to feel that his life is not an aggregation of accidents, but a unity with a significance, sets out to interpret his life to others. His interpretation may of course fall into error. But we feel that autobiography is never so soundly autobiographical as where the writer, instead of discussing his life, is presenting it: in his letters and correspondence, in his conversations and discourses, in his original compositions, whatever the special output of the life may be. The history of civilization corresponds to the formal discussion of the life. World Literature is autobiography in the sense that it is the presentation of civilization in its own best products, its most significant moments emphasized as they appear illuminated with the highest literary setting.

CONCLUSION

THE PLACE OF WORLD LITERATURE IN EDUCATION

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THIS book has been written from the standpoint of education: alike formal academic education and that half-involuntary self-education which fills the lives of thinkers and readers. Its general drift has been that literature, traditionally foremost of studies, has fallen behind in educational evolution; that, although literary intermingled with historic and linguistic matter occupies a large share of attention, nevertheless literature itself has yet to be precipitated as an independent study; further, that to recognize fully the unity of the whole literary field is the indispensable condition for restoring literary study to its fundamental position in the humanities side of education. I have ventured to formulate these ideas, or at least one aspect of them, in the name World Literature. Such World Literature is a paramount interest for the man of culture. And in academic activity World Literature has a field, a method, and a scholarship of its own, quite distinct from the field and method and scholarship of existing literary studies.

If education be surveyed from this point of view, what most obviously attracts attention is the study we call Classics. This is the departmental study of Latin and Greek. However high may be the value of this

study on other grounds, yet it proves totally inadequate if considered as a training in literature. For the best of its students the literary culture it has brought must be pronounced not catholic, but provincial. For the vast majority of those who have passed through a classical course there has been no training in literature at all. And it is easy to see how this has come about. Our conceptions of education date from the period of the Renaissance. At that time classical studies made the *pièce de resistance* of the whole structure of culture, and were admirably fitted for the purpose, from their even balance between linguistic discipline and literature of the highest order. But inevitably in the course of time other studies invaded the educational programme, diminishing the proportion of the whole which could be allotted to Classics. Now, all this diminution in the attention given to classical study was a diminution made from its literary side, since the literary culture does not commence until the difficult Latin and Greek languages have been thoroughly mastered. Accordingly, while education as a whole has been advancing, the amount of literary training afforded by classical studies has been proportionately diminishing; until — apart from a small body of exceptional students — the whole effect of Classics is linguistic training, and the study is for the most part advocated for its disciplinary value.

Let it be clearly understood that I am not attempting to balance the relative value of linguistic and literary training. Such a question cannot be discussed in general terms, but is bound up with the special circum-

stances of particular students or institutions. To those who take the position that they have not time for literature, having more important work to do, there is nothing more to be said. But the vast majority of those who enter upon classical studies do so in the belief that they are engaging in the study of literature; for these it becomes necessary to point out that, as things stand, the literary training has evaporated out of the study of Classics in all but a few exceptional cases. Some suspicion of this, I believe, underlies the objections we sometimes hear put forward against literary culture in general, as compared with scientific or practical education. I believe that, if these objections could be brought to cross-examination, it would be found that there was no antagonism against literary culture in itself, but an instinctive doubt whether professed literary studies really secure it. If a man sets out to study science or history, the chances are that what he is seeking he will get in greater or less degree. But of those who make literary study their goal the large majority fail to reach it.

For alternatives to Classics we are offered such studies as Modern Languages and English. From our point of view of literary study these seem a very superficial remedy. It may be true that, modern languages being more quickly mastered, the student is in this way brought into contact with a larger amount of literature in a given time. But it is also true that what literature he touches has by no means the crucial importance of classical literature. He is being kept all the time on the outer circumference, and does not

reach the real centre of literature. It sounds plausible when one of the English-speaking races says, At least let us know our own literature. But the question arises, What is "our own literature"? Is it literature in the English tongue? Or is it the literature, in whatever language expressed, which as an historic fact has inspired our great masters, and formed our own thought and taste?[1] We must beware of false analogies between language and literature. If the question were of the English language, then it is clear there can be no scientific study of this without going back to its sources in Anglo-Saxon or Old English. But of our literature, as we have seen, the sources are to be looked for elsewhere: in the classical and biblical literatures, and the influences of European Romance. In our literary pedigree Anglo-Saxon literature has no place, unless it be the place of a poor relation. The objector on behalf of the English-speaking races was sound in his instinct, but he expressed himself wrongly; what he really desired was, not English literature, but literature in English. English literature, great as it is, remains only a single item of the literary whole; what the Englishman needs is world literature brought to him in his own English tongue, in which he can reach the literary effect of what he is reading, undistracted by interruptions of linguistic puzzles, and the mechanism of grammar and dictionary.

It is the absence from our educational schemes of

[1] It is hardly necessary to remark that ample justice is done to considerations of this kind in Mr. W. J. Courthope's magnificent *History of English Poetry*.

what in this work has been called World Literature, that makes all these alternatives futile. The study of Classics, combined with world literature in English, has all the advantages claimed for classical studies, and the objection is removed that in such treatment literature is lost in language. I remember hearing a man of the highest academic position, and one who had taken the highest classical honors of his university, describe his own introduction as a schoolboy to Virgil. It was the custom of the school for three classes to take their Virgil together; the highest of the three could perhaps prepare two hundred lines for a lesson, the next class one hundred, the third (to which the speaker belonged) only fifty. Thus, his first acquaintance with the *Æneid* consisted in reading lines 1 to 50, lines 201 to 250, lines 401 to 450, and so on. Of course, the motive of this otherwise ridiculous arrangement was opportunity for drill in elementary Latin, which is a good thing in itself. But how simple it would have been with this drill to combine the literary presentation of the whole *Æneid* in English, with all its chances of awakening through a masterpiece a literary taste at the most impressionable period of a boy's life.[1] Simi-

[1] The principle here touched is of wide-reaching importance. Even in its own field the prevailing study of Classics is discredited by the small proportion of Greek and Latin literature that can be covered by a school or even a university course; many writers of high importance in their bearing on ancient history and life being seldom attempted. If the principle were followed of combining a nucleus of Greek and Latin authors, thoroughly studied in the original, with a much wider literary area read freely in translation, the whole study would be brought nearer to its own ideals.

larly, modern languages and English make excellent specialties added to a basis of general literary study. The choice between the alternative systems will depend upon a variety of educational considerations not pertinent to our present discussion; but any one of them, thus supplemented by world literature, becomes educationally defensible as a foundation for humanity studies. And it would be found that the linguistic interest in the Latin, Greek, French, German, would be quickened by the literary interest of the whole study.

But there is something more to be said. All these alternatives, if we allow all they claim for themselves, yet stand convicted of omitting the Bible from their literary education. There is no claim for classical literature as an element of culture which cannot, with equal force, be made for biblical literature. It is the scandal of our higher education that we acquiesce in the tradition of the half pagan Renaissance which leaves a gulf between academic discipline and what we feel to be real culture; that our education neglects the one literature of which the matter surpasses all other matter in intrinsic importance, while its literary forms are just what is needed to widen the confined outlook of a criticism founded on the single literature of the ancient Greeks. Of course, the ground of this neglect is partly the fear of biblical study touching points of religious and ecclesiastical dispute. The objection would come with more weight, if those who urge it were taking some means of otherwise providing for biblical culture. But I believe there is no real substance in objections of this type. The question is not of theo-

logical, or directly religious teaching, but of literature which, quite apart from its connection with religion, would demand attention as part of our intellectual inheritance; of biblical literature treated purely as literature, which makes the common ground on which differing theologies meet. Of course, a tactless teacher could make trouble in handling this matter: but so can a tactless teacher make trouble in handling science and history. I may bear personal testimony on this subject. For the last twenty years, a considerable part of my work has been to present biblical matter, both to public audiences and university classes; and I have never found any difficulty of the kind suggested which was not trifling in itself and easily met. But if there be such difficulties, they must be faced and overcome. If the study of literature cannot square itself with its own first principles, we must expect to see it superseded by better organized studies.

To translate these general considerations into academic terms. A course of education is understood to combine a general with special elements: all educators agree upon this, however much they may differ as to the distribution of the two parts. The point of the present argument is that World Literature should not be treated as a specialty, but as a part of general education; it is not to be considered as an option that may be taken late, but as an essential in the foundation stage of education, part of the common body of knowledge which makes the election of optional studies intelligent. No one would suggest a complete scheme of education, however specialized in the end, which

had not at some point touched literature: my argument is that in this literary element, be it smaller or greater, World Literature is the important part. For World Literature is an elastic thing, that lends itself to more elementary or more advanced study. What in this work has been put forward under that name is purely an individual scheme; but some presentation of general literature, reflecting the unity of literature so far as our own history and civilization have been affected by literary influences, has importance at any stage of education. For education, elementary or advanced, such World Literature is more potent than any single literature can be in securing the aims of literary culture: in developing the sense of what literature is; in broadening human sympathies, as travel broadens them, by bringing us into contact with racial ideas different from our own; in stimulating the interest that makes a man a reader; in cherishing the taste which will shun the bad simply by preferring the good. It is more important — if the choice must be made — that students, whether younger or older, should be acquainted with Homer than that they should be acquainted with Chaucer or Dryden or Scott. Classical tragedies and comedies are more important for us than any dramatic literature except Shakespeare, and they have a priority of time over Shakespearean dramas because they are so much simpler. Bible story, prophetic vision and lyrics, wisdom literature with its glorification of the simple things of life, are more powerful in their literary training than selected specimens of English or Latin literature. For awaken-

ing insight into literature and its power of interpreting life more may be done by following the versions of the Faust Story, or by a course of comparative reading, than by the study of a whole single literature isolated from other literatures. The perspective of the whole literary field, which is the essential point of World Literature, is that which gives to each particular literature when it is studied fresh interest and fresh significance. It is the common bond which draws together the humanity studies into a single discipline. And for those whose main interest is widely removed from literature, who follow the physical or mathematical sciences or art, if their education touches literature at all, it is this World Literature that most concerns them, and not any single literature, even though that be the literature of their native land.

This contention is simply one side of a wider consideration applying to liberal education as a whole: in our liberal education it is the general as against the special side that at the present time needs strengthening. Our education ought to be self-explaining as a whole scheme, instead of being, as it generally is, a congeries of separate subjects, maintained by the excellence of the particular subjects, but without any comparative grasp; a house without a building plan. If modern education be compared with the old-time education which consisted mainly in classical studies, no reasonable man will doubt that there has been a great advance. But it is also true that the variety of studies we have introduced have fought their way into the programme one by one, squeezing classical culture into smaller

and smaller proportions; there has been no revision of the general scheme of learning that binds the separate parts together. Differentiation and generalization are the systole and diastole of mental progress. It is inevitable that as time goes on newer and more minute special studies should assert themselves; it is equally inevitable, if progress is to be sound, that with these newer interests the whole field of learning should from time to time be resurveyed, and the distribution of its parts recast. It is from lack of this generalizing element that our schemes of liberal culture so often present a strange mixture of thoroughness and looseness, of precision with absence of perspective, lumps of real knowledge in a paste of unconscious ignorance. A student of one type will, at the conclusion of an academic course, have a fair grasp of English history and the history of ancient Greece and Rome: all between is to him a desert with elephants for cities; he may have taken classical honors without having the Middle Ages so much as mentioned to him, or he thinks of them as a dark interval when nothing particular was being done. A student of another type is able to do really expert work in one or two sciences; yet, let him from the starting-point of these sciences proceed to wider discussions, his discussion betrays how ungrounded he is even in the philosophy of science itself. A man can hardly, at the present time, set up as an artist in any branch of art without having really wide knowledge of his art, and a minutely developed technique: this does not prevent the fact that a large proportion of artists seem narrow in their culture, and those

who are brilliant exceptions would be the first to insist that this narrow general culture reacts upon the art itself. The significance of all this is not anything inimical to high specialization: the difficulty is that, while in every special study there are plenty of eager guides, yet there seems a conspiracy of neglect in reference to the broader studies that make the map of the general field of learning, and bring the special studies together. Lack of this generalized education takes from the specialties themselves great part of their cultural value.

The late Sir J. R. Seeley was a man of high academic position, and an author of front rank: he speaks in the strongest language of the way our education fails in this very respect of being without ideal and plan, of the absence of any relation between education and reality.

> Look, then, how the English people treat their children. Try and discover from the way they train them, from the education they give them, what they wish them to be. They have ceased, almost consciously ceased, to have any ideal at all. . . . The parent, from sheer embarrassment and want of an ideal, has in a manner abdicated.[1]

But, in Seeley's view, it is not the education of children only that suffers from this lack of ideal and plan.

> In England the ideas of the multitudes are perilously divergent from those of the thinking class. No sufficient pains have been taken to diffuse everywhere the real religion of the age. No adequate doctrine of civilization is taught among us. Science only penetrates either in the form of useful information or else in that of a negative doctrine opposed to religion; as itself a main part of relig-

[1] *Natural Religion*, page 134.

ion, as the grand revelation of God in these later times supplementing rather than superseding older revelations, it remains almost as much unknown as in the dark ages. Still less known perhaps is that doctrine of the gradual development of human society which alone can explain to us the present state of affairs, give us the clue to history, save us from political aberrations and point out the direction of progress. So long as churches were efficient, this idea of the continuity of civilization was kept before the general mind. A grand outline of God's dealings with the human race, drawn from the Bible and the church doctrine, a sort of map of history, was possessed by all alike. Are we sufficiently aware what bewilderment must have arisen when this is no longer the case, when those old outlines grow unserviceable, but no new map is furnished? [1]

He says again: —

In our culture there is at present a most dangerous gap. While most other great subjects of knowledge have been brought under systematic treatment, rescued from mere popular misconception, and then, when the great generalizations have been duly settled, rendered back to the people in authoritative teaching, one subject remains an exception, and that one the all-important subject of the history of civilization. No grand trustworthy outlines have yet been put within the reach of all, which may serve as a chart to guide us in political and social movement.[2]

It is the crudity of our general scheme of studies, however excellent the separate parts may be, that has taken the interest out of education, and caused it to be voted by outsiders the dullest of topics. And it is in the humanities side of education that the absence of coördination is most felt, the absence of what Seeley calls a doctrine or outline of civilization. What in this

[1] *Natural Religion*, page 208. [I have somewhat condensed the passage.]

[2] *Natural Religion*, page 256.

work is called World Literature is just what is needed to draw together the scattered parts of humanity studies. When the unity of all history and the unity of all literature are made the basis on which such studies are arranged, the ideal of thoroughness in details not being allowed to obscure the more difficult ideal of accurate perspective, then the humanity studies will carry with them their own vindication.

It seems natural to go on to another consideration: that of the change which seems to be coming over the conception of a university, a change I would describe by saying that universities seem to be narrowing into schools. School education I understand to be education conceived as a preparation for something, university education is education as an end in itself. This definition may perhaps be challenged by those who would point out that the earliest universities appear in Europe as combinations of professional schools. But this is an argument of names rather than of things: the word "university," before it settled down to its academic significance, had a broader sense, something like that of the word "union" at the present time; we remember the great leader who was accustomed to call the Church of Christ the University of the Saints.[1] As to school education, usage is perfectly definite: the clergyman, the lawyer, the doctor, the artist, are prepared for their professions by divinity schools, law schools, medical schools, schools of art; the common school is similarly that which prepares for common life. Yet there is surely such a thing as edu-

[1] Huss's phrase: *Ecclesia Christi universitas prædestinatorum.*

cation for its own sake with no ulterior purpose, and what is the organ of such education if not the university? Of course, in the detailed teaching of any particular subject the two types of education cannot in practice be separated; institutions called universities must administer what is school education, and institutions called schools must give what, in the sense of the definition, is the university idea of education for its own sake. But the new tendency is for universities to move further and further from their function of cultural teaching, and concentrate more and more upon the school function of preparation for special activities.

It is not so long since the university was looked upon as the natural home of culture. Unfortunately, an impoverished significance came to attach itself to the word "culture," and it seemed to connote the *possession* of whatever culture may be. Accordingly, academic bodies tended to become close circles of superior persons, organized for cultural intercourse and for the training of their successors. Not only was this an unworthy ideal, but such a social body was bound to stagnate: university circles became reactionary and conservative, and university teaching a monotony of courses of lectures delivered over and over again from manuscripts yellow with age. A healthy reaction set in, by which a university was to be a body of persons doing original work as well as teaching. Nothing could be sounder. Only, a somewhat limited sense was attached to the word "original": it was associated with what was called advancing the boundaries of knowledge; with investigation, but only investigation

in new directions. Thus the school function of a university was emphasized, in the form of training investigators. Of course universities continued to teach, but with a difference: to teach was their duty, to investigate became their ambition.

Now, if culture is to be a wholesome thing, the word must connote the *diffusion* of whatever culture may be. As the boundaries of investigation are extended in various directions, there arises a need for reorganizing the general field, redistributing our enlarged knowledge and correlating its parts afresh; above all, there is need for the diffusion of the results through the ranks of the people. There is just as much scope for original work, and work demanding the highest original powers, in the diffusion of knowledge as in its enlargement. New diffusion of knowledge is enlargement of knowledge. Without proportionate diffusion, the enlarged field of learning comes to be like a community in which there are forces to stimulate economic production without enhanced provisions for distribution, a state of things we associate with crops rotting for lack of rolling stock, and markets that can find no buyers. We talk much about the grossly unequal distribution of wealth throughout the ranks of a people. But no small proportion of human ills rest upon the grossly and unnecessarily unequal distribution of knowledge. We have a religious world shaken by doubts, and falling foul of its own most distinguished leaders, while those leaders are absorbed in the very newest questions that have just emerged, careless that results secured a generation or two ago have never been really brought home to the

mass of their followers. We know how dangerous economic heresies can run rampant, while highly trained economic minds prefer the easier task of controversy with rivals to the more difficult problem of making the foundations of economic science prevalent in the public mind. New enlargement and wide diffusion of knowledge stand on equal terms: but diffusion has the priority in time. No limits can be set to the advance of knowledge; yet there does not seem to be any overpowering reason why a particular discovery should be made to-day rather than to-morrow. On the other hand, sluggish diffusion of improved knowledge means another generation of men passing away without it.

I do not forget that there are some who strongly defend this shifting in the ideal of a university, and in defending it use a word that seems to have an almost magical effect at the present time: they cry out that our education must be *practical*. If by "practical" is meant close connection with actual life, I should be the first to take sides against an education that was unpractical. But in reality the argument veils an inadequate and false conception of life. Life is made up of work and leisure. No one is now found to defend the idle life that has no work in it. But the correlative of this is equally true, that a life without leisure is an immoral life. If a man because of preoccupation with his professional or philanthropic or social duties has lost all control of his time, and cannot retire into himself and give heed to his self-development, he has lapsed from the life of a free man into the life of a slave. The fourth

commandment is still valid: and the significance of the fourth commandment is not the details of sabbath observance, but the duty of leisure; its place in the decalogue means that the moral duty of leisure is as fundamental as the duty of purity or honesty. It is pre-eminently in the present age that this truth calls for assertion. In spite of all clamor to the contrary, the reader of literature knows that this age is in advance of most previous ages in matters of purity and honesty. But the special vice of the time is the failure to see the moral obligation of leisure; that it becomes possible in our strenuous habits for a man or woman of high purpose to be so absorbed in good works as to forget the claims of personal development, to think that zeal in duty to God and our neighbor can excuse from duty to our self. Let the adequate conception of what life means be accepted, and it becomes clear that the preparation for life is twofold: school education is the fitting for life's work, general culture prepares for the leisure time. And men's characters and value for society depend quite as much upon the way they occupy their leisure hours as upon what they consider their specific work.

Such a change as has been suggested in the ideal of what constitutes university organization is of wide-reaching consequence, since universities, directly or indirectly, determine the training of teachers for the whole educational system. The ideal of a university as a body of investigators and teachers is perfectly sound: the two things go well side by side, and the natural inclinations of individuals, with other circumstances, will de-

tute the foundation of our modern life. The first movement was in the sphere of religion. In the Middle Ages thinking in religious matters was the function of a particular class, the clergy, into which the laity did not intrude: what we call the Reformation consists, more than anything else, in the fact of the masses, or the middle classes, claiming gradually to think for themselves on religious topics — of course under the leadership of distinguished minds — and so religious thought becomes a universal interest. Similarly, in earlier times there was a governing class, and the rest of society (with occasional protests) allowed itself to be governed; by the Revolution the masses grew to have a voice in government, marshalled under men of light and leading, and political activity became a universal interest. What we are now seeing is that culture, traditionally the interest of a small class, chiefly found in universities, is coming to animate the world outside. Not only what has been called by the name of university extension, but the wide spread of literary and similar clubs, reading circles, chautauquas and summer schools, organizations round libraries as centres, enormous expansion of the publishing trade in regard to standard books, these are among the symptoms of the change. Of course, the culture represented by all this is at present a chaos: all types of efficiency and inefficiency, sometimes to the point of grotesqueness, are exhibited: yet it is all good evidence of educational ambition.

Thus the university ideal is being extended; and the extension is twofold. It is an extension, we have seen, from a small class to the people at large, including those

who have no connection with universities. But what appears to me still more important is the extension that affects those who have been to universities and completed their course: for these university extension means extension of the educational period to the whole of their life, the pursuit of culture becoming a continuous interest, side by side with other interests, and with the practical duties of life. Traditional education assumes that there is a cultural period in a life, a few years at a university ending with a degree. But this whole conception of a cultural period and a degree system belongs to the school function of the university: where the question is of qualifying for a profession no other system is possible. For general culture the point to emphasize is, not concentration in a few years, but extension to the leisure time of a whole life. I have spoken of education tending to become a universal interest like religion or politics or sport. We should think it strange if the plan of concentration instead of extension were applied to these other interests of life: if people were invited to give up three or four years entirely to religious exercises, or entirely to sport, with a qualification at the end of the period suggesting that the religious exercises, or the sport, had been got through for life, and that other matters might occupy attention. It seems more wholesome to *extend* the religious exercises, and the sport, through the life as a whole, with continuous yet not exclusive interest. It is a similar spreading of higher education through a lifetime side by side with other vital interests that, to my mind, makes the most important form of university extension.

clear ground plan of the whole, a map as it were of what there is to do. The combination of these two conditions, a ground plan of a subject and a stimulated interest for continuing the study, makes the most favorable chance for the general course of a university system to bear fruit in the future. For general education the criterion is the effect on the average man. After a life spent in teaching I would say that I have a great respect for the average university or university extension student. Of course, in any body of men and women gathered for educational or any other purpose there will be a percentage of loafers; and this is a difficulty that has to be met. But my experience is that the average student is ready to work, and — in proportion to his ability — to do hard work, if the work is properly placed before him. In professional training it may be enough merely to prescribe studies: professional interest makes the motive force. For the general student it is necessary to take him into the confidence of the teacher, or, so to speak, into the confidence of the subject studied; he may be apathetic to a mere task, but will rouse up to a piece of work that justifies itself in a general plan of a subject. We are brought once more to the value of broad studies that illuminate a whole field of thought.

But, whatever may be the future action of universities, the university extension ideal remains: the volunteer university of self-directed education, recruited alike from those who have no association with university life and those who have completed academic courses and have their whole lives before them for their own study. To these World Literature has a special appeal: for it

How does all this bear upon the university system itself? In two ways. In the first place, universities as the natural leaders of culture ought to coöperate gladly with all proper agencies for such higher education outside their walls; in particular, coöperate by the training of teachers, teachers who should combine the high standards of university work with the missionary spirit. But, in the second place, the teaching within the university itself is affected by these considerations, so far as that teaching is general and not professional training. The current idea of general (as distinguished from professional) education is that it is of the nature of an irreducible minimum, which the university must jealously guard; and, where opportunity serves, the university seeks to raise its standards. But all this is a conception produced by confusion with the school function of training for a profession. Where the question is of culture as an end in itself, the way of raising the standard is, not enhanced requirements, but to vitalize the teaching power in the university and make it more effective. Of course, in all educational work testing goes side by side with teaching. But the scheme of general education must be looked at, not with a view to acquirements attained at the close of a university course, but with a view to the influence of the course on the whole future life of the students. Two points are of particular importance. The first and foremost aim should be to stimulate interest in the subject taught; acquirements are at best temporary, but a vital interest once aroused may go on forever. Again, in whatever may be the particular study, the aim should be to give a

the new generation goes rapidly through the stages of evolution which earlier generations, each for itself, achieved slowly and with difficulty. Apply this to the humanities, and World Literature at once justifies its position: the World Literature which we have seen as the autobiography of civilization, in which the general outline of civilization, so pointedly absent at present from our educational schemes, appears, not in formal theory, but in a succession of luminous reflections.

is they who have created the study, while academic schemes have lingered in the departmental limitations of literary interest. The pioneers of World Literature are, in the first case, the great scholars who have added literary power to scholarship, and by elevating the art of translation to its present level have been mediating interpreters between one civilization and another. With these must be recognized, in the second place, the great publishing enterprise which, in our day, is more and more widely spreading the classics of the nations in worthy and accessible forms. Both these have been catering for the general reader, and not for the specialist. On the other hand, it is the temptation of self-directed education to become scrappy. Yet the same principle applies here that applies in more regularly organized studies: the necessity in any subject of a broad foundation, with wide perspective and careful combination of parts; this is the basis which gives soundness to the treatment of special topics. I am no doubt biased in favor of my own study. Yet it seems a reasonable view that World Literature, as the term has been used in this book, is fitted to be a foundation study in general culture. Literature is the most universal of interests: what is needed is to transcend the boundaries made by diversity of language, and to realize the unity of the literary field; that the English reader should seek not English literature so much as literature in English. Popular inquiry has been active as to the "best books": what is wanted is the philosophy lying behind the selection of these best books. Education has been wisely defined as the epitome of civilization: implying that

SYLLABUS

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Introduction

The study of literature lags behind other studies as still remaining in the departmental stage: national literatures studied separately, and in subordination to language and history — recognition of the unity of all literature indispensable condition for elevating literary study to the rank of such studies as history, language, philosophy, art.

One aspect of such study of literature may be formulated as World Literature: the unity of literature viewed in perspective from the standpoint of the observer — thus World Literature will be different for different nations and different individuals of a nation — its philosophic basis made by two supplementary principles: (1) the Literary Pedigree of the nation (2) Intrinsic Literary Value.

Such World Literature from the point of view of the English-speaking peoples the subject of the present work.

The Literary Pedigree of the English-speaking peoples rests upon three factors — (1) Hellenic civilization as reflected in the classical literature of Greece and Rome — (2) Hebraic civilization as embodied in the Bible — these the flower, respectively, of the Aryan and the Semitic civilizations — (3) a third factor made by the fusion of the other two in Mediævalism and Romance.

Full discussion of the essential spirit of Hellenic and Hebraic (pages 13–26) — of Mediævalism as the fusion of various influences that crystallize in the literature of Romance (pages 26–53).

Chapter I. — Literary Bibles: The Holy Bible

The Hebraic basis of our civilization is not the history of Israel, but the spiritual interpretation of the history of Israel embodied by the sacred writers in the literature we call the Bible.

Dramatic movement of the Old Testament: gradual breaking down of the Old Covenant [with a People] and vision of a New Covenant [with individual hearts] — the epilogue presents the Servant of Jehovah transformed from a Nation to a Redeemer.

Wisdom literature belonging to the interval between the Old and New Testaments has a progressive movement of its own. — The historic framework has here to be inferred: contact of Hellenism with Hebraism — the one stands for Individuality, the other for Immortality (abstract): their union develops idea of Immortality of the Individual soul.

The New Testament [anticipated in *Jeremiah* and the Isaiahan *Rhapsody*] is the Covenant between God and individual hearts.

Structure of the New Testament: historic framework and higher forms. — Acts and Words of Jesus [*Luke*] — Acts and Words [Pauline epistles] of the Apostles — for the next stage the historic framework must be inferred: the accentuated expectation of the second coming of Christ [General epistles and other gospels] — Epilogue to the whole Bible: *Book of Revelation.* — Pages 90–1.

Dramatic movement of New Testament: the gradual enlargement in the conception of Jesus Christ — until the epilogue presents Him as centre of all history and significance of all prophecy.

Chapter II. — Literary Bibles: Classical Epic and Tragedy

A literary bible may be constructed by the combination of Classical Epic with Classical Tragedy, so far as this touches the matter of the epics.

Heroic Myth of the First Generation: Argonautic Expedition
The Argonauts of Apollonius Rhodius
Medea of Euripides
[William Morris's *Jason*]

Heroic Myth of the Second Generation: Trojan War
The Gathering for Troy
Iphigenia in Aulis of Euripides

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This Bible, as dating back to a period before manuscript writing could indicate literary distinctions, has come down to us destitute of its true literary form, and impressed with a different form [texts for comment] the creation of mediæval commentators — restoration of the Bible to its true literary structure essential for its interpretation.

I. Interest of particular books of the Bible as Hebraic Classics, extending our conceptions of literary form traditionally limited by Greek criticism, which was the formulation of a single literature.

Discussion of notable literary forms in the Bible (pages 65–71).

II. Special literary interest in the Unity of the Bible: its books, read in their literary sequence, draw together into a scheme like a literary plot.

General form of the Bible: an historic framework [constructed late] holding together higher literary forms [of all dates, early and late] which contain the spirit of the literature: the whole may thus be conceived of as the autobiography of a spiritual evolution.

The structure of the Bible as a whole resembles that of a Drama in two Acts [of Old and New Testaments] with an Interlude [of Wisdom literature: theology giving place to devout meditation on life].

The Old Testament is the Covenant between God and the People of Israel, a people chosen to be the revelation of Himself to other peoples.

Structure of the Old Testament. — Prologue [previous covenants between God and mankind] — Genesis [origin of the chosen people] — The Exodus [or emigration] — The Judges [transition to secular government] — Secular government of Kings with spiritual opposition of Prophets — the Captivity — Ecclesiastical Chronicles of the Return [the People of Israel become the Jewish Church] — an Epilogue in the Isaiahan Rhapsody [Divine plan of history in dramatic form]. — Pages 77–84.

Special poetic interest in *Odyssey:* treatment of wonder incidents, an adumbration of the coming Mythology (pages 141–7).

V. Literary interest of epic and tragic treatment applied to the same subject-matter.

Summarizing discussion of Greek tragedy as a highly specialized form of world poetry (pages 148–50) — as the worship of Destiny (pages 150–1). — Euripides as a central point in the history of poetry (page 152).

VI. Virgil: artificial poetry addressed to an audience permeated with Greek culture. — Analysis of plot and movement of the *Æneid* reveals fundamental purpose to harmonize Rome and its destiny of world empire with Greek antiquities — thus the great link between Roman and Grecian — also between Roman and Mediæval.

Chapter III. — Literary Bibles: Shakespeare

Shakespeare a rare conjunction of the most complete poetic individuality with a moment of literary history offering the freest scope for its manifestation.

Romantic Drama	Materials: Stories of romance [accumulation of the whole of the Middle Ages]
	Form: Story worked upon by Drama in its most concentrated form [newly recovered Classical Drama]
	Popular Audiences: (1) interested in dramatization of story [by the Miracle Play] — (2) entirely free from limiting influence of a critical attitude
	Current philosophy of life: full Hebraic spirit of the Bible before this is warped into Puritanism

The Shakespearean conception of plot reflects the constituent elements (pages 175–8).

Quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles
The Iliad
Rhesus of Euripides
Rivalry after the death of Achilles
Ajax and *Philoctetes* of Sophocles
The Fall of Troy
Hecuba and *Daughters of Troy* of Euripides
The Departure from Troy: of Agamemnon:
Aeschylus's trilogy (*Agamemnon, Sepulchral Rites, Eumenides*) — *Electra* of Sophocles — *Electra, Orestes, Iphigenia in Taurica* of Euripides
of Menelaus:
Helen of Euripides
of Odysseus:
The Odyssey
of Trojan Captives:
Andromache of Euripides
of Æneas:
Virgil's *Æneid:* grand link between Latin and Greek — and between Latin and Mediæval

I. The body of literature so constructed (1) involves the relations between Floating and Written literature: this in the present case has evolved the fundamental poetic interest of Classical Echoing, the main contribution of Hellenic poetry to universal literature in antithesis to Romantic Freedom the creation of Mediævalism (pages 102–8). — (2) It presents a pre-historic civilization of supreme interest. — (3) It has had the prerogative voice in poetic art.

II. The Argonautic section has the special interest of being carried a stage further in poetic crystallization by Morris's *Jason.*

III. Analysis of plot and movement of the *Iliad* reveals interest of exuberant subject-matter preponderating over interest of form.

Detailed discussion of poetic motives in the *Iliad* (pages 116–34).

IV. Analysis of plot and movement of the *Odyssey* reveals perfect balance between matter and form.

Marlowe's Version. — Pages 224–31

Product of the Popular Renaissance: a transition stage between the Middle Ages [Robust Imagination] and Modern Times [Rationalization]

Gaining the World	Magic Approach to Rationalization in its application to mere curiosity, as expression of the spirit of the age
Losing the Soul	Hell as finale of story Rationalization in course of the action: Free will undermined by hysteric shocks at transitions between hope and despair
Spiritual Market	Mediæval Tempter Rationalizing touches of spiritual conceptions for Mephistophilis and for hell

Poetic Form: Imperfectly developed Elizabethan drama [serious plot with rough relief scenes] — with remnants of Mediæval drama

Calderon's Version. — Pages 231–7

Product of the Spanish Renaissance: Exalted sentiments [chivalry, gallantry, knowledge] fused in an ardor of [Catholic] religious Devotion — introducing special motives: Inverted Scepticism [drawing from pagan to Christian] — Love Passion [making a double plot] — Magic as Anti-Religion: Holy Magic [of the Church] pitted against Black Magic [worship of the Devil]

The World	Gained by Evil Magic [of occult nature power] Lost by Holy Magic [spells dissolved by Holy Name]
The Soul	Lost: Voluntary surrender in blood-signed bond under motive of passion Regained: Voluntary confession with blood of martyrdom — passion changing to pure love

Chapter IV. — Literary Bibles: Dante and Milton

What makes a literary bible in this case is the antithesis of two masterpieces, which present constructions of the sum of things as seen by two eras ancestral to our own era.

I. Dante the complete embodiment of Mediævalism. — The *Divine Comedy* reflects various features of mediæval Catholicism — notably (1) symbolism as the supreme form of truth and (2) idealization on a basis of sex homage.

II. Milton reflects the whole course of the Renaissance. — The *Paradise Lost* Puritan theology in Classical form — the tradition of Classical Echoing revived and made to extend over biblical as well as Hellenic literature.

Full discussion and illustration of the poetic effect called Classical Echoing in Milton (pages 196–219).

Chapter V. — Literary Bibles: Versions of the Faust Story

What constitutes the literary bible in this case is a germ story, involving three pregnant ideas, developed in successive masterpieces which reflect the thinking on these ideas of successive eras or schools of thought.

Germ of the Faust Story the biblical aphorism: What shall it *profit* a man if he *gain the whole world* and *lose his soul?* — this involves:

Gaining the whole world
Losing the soul
Machinery of a spiritual market

Traditional Story of Faust

Gaining the world: mediæval magic
Losing the soul: mediæval hell
Spiritual market: selling the soul to the Devil

The Great World: Part Second	The World presented as Spectacle [Court, Society, Wealth, Pleasure, Beauty]. — Act I The World presented in Science [Processes of genesis, evolution]. — Act II The World presented in Art [Harmony of Classic and Romantic]. — Act III The World presented as Power [Glory, State, especially Enterprise]. — Act IV

The two worlds clash: Public enterprise struggling with Individual limitations. — Act V. [The two final scenes must be separated as Epilogue to the whole poem.]

Goethe's Version: Losing the Soul. — Pages 282–8

In the action of the poem the soul of Faust appears so far lost that (1) he has been led by unquenchable aspiration after truth to embrace Magic [dramatic symbol for illegitimate knowledge] — (2) in his love of Margaret he has made a sudden surrender to gross passion that works her ruin

The Epilogue presents the soul of Faust beyond the grave (1) preserved for redemption by its unquenchable aspiration, though adulterated by elements of earth — (2) by Love the earthly elements are purged out, and the love of Margaret is seen drawing him to a mystic region of heavenly Love in which the redemption will be complete

Bailey's Version. — Pages 288–94

Product of Modern Speculative Mysticism: giving creative reality to a mass of theological, ontological, astrological thinking, on a basis of traditional orthodoxy — making a variant of the Faust Story with new elements: Typical position of Festus, who represents the end of the human race as Adam its beginning — Basis on doctrine of Election and omnipotent Grace. — Underplots of allied temptations and love motives

Gaining the World	Knowledge [of the universe] and Power [over the human world] overruled as a means of universal salvation

Spiritual Market	Lucifer [of *Isaiah* xiv. 12] identified with Satan, Antichrist, the Fallen Angels — and interpreted (by philosophy of magic) as god of the lower world

Poetic Form: Modern drama, specially developed on the side of lyrics and spectacular effects

Goethe's Version: general view. — Pages 237–9

Product of Modern Culture: introducing as special interests: Culture a supreme motive of life — Love passion, making secondary plot — Magic accepted as symbol for illegitimate modes of culture

Poetic Form: German drama, as formulated in the Prelude on the Stage: union of stage-spectacle, philosophy, humor

Goethe's Version: Machinery of Temptation. — Pages 240–51

The traditional conception enlarged by ideas from the *Book of Job* [with correct discrimination of the two uses of "Satan"] — this realized in the Prologue in Heaven

Mephistopheles [a Spirit of Denial or Challenge: Job's Satan modified by modern cynicism] *undertakes in the case of Faust to play the part of Devil* [mediæval Tempter]. — Thus, a constant relief element: Mephistopheles caricaturing the Devil's work as he performs it

The original idea of Barter, or a Spiritual Market, is replaced by the idea of a Wager over souls

Goethe's Version: Gaining the Whole World. — Pages 251–82

The Individual World: Part First	At the outset Faust possesses the whole range of mature philosophic culture — the action adds the world of social pleasure — and [miraculously] restores Faust's lost youth Thus: Age *plus* Youth covers the whole Individual Life

6). — Discussion of form and matter of the poem (pages 336–50) — especially dominance of the one-two-three form (pages 338–46).

Chapter VII. — Comparative Reading

The comparative attitude of mind has application, not only to literary history and science, but also to appreciative reading.

Reading group centring around the story of Alcestis. — The *Alcestis* of Euripides — Browning's *Balaustion* — *Alcestis the Second* of Alfieri — Love of Alcestis in William Morris's *Earthly Paradise* — Longfellow's *Golden Legend* [as a parallel in Christian surroundings]

Another reading group: The *Bacchanals* of Euripides — the *Book of Ecclesiastes* — the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam* — Tennyson's *Vision of Sin* — the Second book of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*

Minor groups

Distinguish carefully between comparative reading in this sense and comparisons of merit.

Chapter VIII. — Essays and Lyrics

The Essay [central interest of author's personality — fragmentariness and freedom of form] — and [subjective] Lyrics — these make a special medium for literary self-revelation of authors.

The Essay in World Literature. — Pages 382–401

Hebraic origin: wisdom literature, and especially *Ecclesiasticus:* development of the Essay out of the Gnome.

Modern counterpart: Essays of the Bacon type — modern reversion to Hebraic type in Tupper and Walt Whitman.

Hellenic origin less marked: especially Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius.

Losing the Soul	A single sin of passion — the reaction from which culminates in universal salvation
Machinery of Temptation	The Tempter is Milton's Satan colored in manner by Goethe's Mephistopheles — in the reaction the Tempter is himself saved by the love he has used as an instrument of temptation The Temptation is neither Barter nor Wager, but the presentation of the whole world as in the temptation of Christ

Poetic Form: Rhapsodic Drama [as in biblical prophecy]: Scenic elements extending to the whole universe — Dialogue supplemented by Episodic Disquisitions which are only in form parts of the dialogue

Chapter VI. — Collateral World Literature

The study of collateral world literature must not be confused with the study of universal literature, which must exhibit the literary output of particular nations.

I. From Arabic literature come the *Koran* and the *Arabian Nights* — form and matter of these. (Pages 297–310.)

II. Indian literature, otherwise of high importance, enters into our world literature only by mediating interpretation. (Pages 310–12.)

III. From Persian literature comes the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*, mainly through mediating interpretation of Fitzgerald. (Pages 312–18.)

IV. Celtic literature. Ossian the Celtic Homer. (Pages 318–25.)

V. Norse epic finds Homeric interpretation in William Morris — supreme literary importance of his *Sigurd*. (Pages 325–33.)

VI. From the group of Extraneous Civilizations we have the *Kalevala* — besides intrinsic beauty this has the double interest (1) of putting us in touch with a distant civilization (2) bringing home to us poetic forms far down the scale of literary evolution (pages 333-

6. Froissart's *Chronicles* [history inspired by chivalry] — Don Quixote [chivalry passing into burlesque].
7. On the threshold of the modern world: Erasmus [modern humor turned on mediævalism] — Bacon [modern philosophy surveyed from outside].
8. Ancient drama of situation worked out in modern life: Molière [comedy] — Racine [tragedy].
9. Sir Walter Scott [romantic epic turned in all directions] — Sienkiewicz [romantic epic concentrated on Slav mediæval life].
10. Rabelais [a colossal literary curiosity].
11. Balzac [comédie humaine] — Victor Hugo [tragédie humaine].
12. Literary reaction of nineteenth century in contrasted types: Byron — Wordsworth.

Chapter X. — World Literature the Autobiography of Civilization

A national literature is recognized as the reflection of the national history: what is true for the smaller unit of the nation is true for the larger unit of civilization. — The history of England a totally different thing from the history of English civilization. — Philosophic history can only analyze civilization: World Literature is civilization presented by itself — thus World Literature of the nature of autobiography.

Conclusion. — The Place of World Literature in Education

The study of World Literature has a field, a method, a scholarship of its own, distinct from the field, method, scholarship of other forms of literary study.

For education in literature the existing studies of Classics, and of Modern Languages and English, are a failure — this would cease to be the case, and these studies would retain their present value, if

Modern Counterpart: Type of Pascal, La Rochefoucauld, etc.

First great modification: Plutarch and interest of Comparative Personality.

Modern Counterpart: Character-writers of seventeenth century.

Second great modification: Montaigne: personality in flashes — monologue conversation.

Third great modification: Type of Addison's *Spectator*: essays *plus* —

1. Periodical machinery: the Essay merges in the Magazine and floating periodical literature.
2. Creative frame story [Spectator and his club]: the Essay merges in the modern Novel [fusion of Essay and Story].

Modern Essayists: reversion to original type with enlargement — Macaulay, Sainte-Beuve, Emerson — interest of personality flashed on variety of topics.

Lyrics in World Literature. — Pages 402–6

Hebraic [compare *Book of Psalms*] and Hellenic [compare *Odes* of Horace]. — Romantic modification: the Sonnet — creative frame in the Sonnet Sequence.

Chapter IX. — Strategic Points in World Literature

1. Plato [philosophy dramatized] — Lucretius [science poetized].

2. Aristophanes [union of exalted and farcical].

3. Mediæval group: *Romance of the Rose — Reynard the Fox — Everyman.*

4. *Morte d'Arthur* [mediæval matter vivified by modern seriousness] — *Canterbury Tales* [mediæval matter vivified by modern humor].

5. Spenser's *Faerie Queene* [meeting point of classical, romantic and puritan].

LIST OF BOOKS

A formal bibliography for a work like the present would be impracticable. What is offered is only the roughest suggestions on the literature touched in the body of the work, intended chiefly for readers who have not access to other sources of information.

World literature at the present time is being opened up to the general reader by the enterprise of leading publishing houses. Reference is made below to such series as The Temple Classics and Everyman's Library [Dent, London; Dutton, New York] — the Arber Reprints [Constable] — the World's Classics [Oxford University Press] — Morley's Universal Library [Routledge] — Bohn's Libraries [Bell; Macmillan].

Addison: see under **Spectator**.

Æschylus: translations (preserving metrical changes) by Lewis Campbell [in World's Classics] and Plumptre [D. C. Heath]. — Separate plays: trilogy of Orestes by Anna Swanwick [Bell] and by E. D. A. Morshead as "The House of Atreus" [Kegan Paul] — the *Suppliants* by Morshead [Kegan Paul] — the *Agamemnon* translated by Robert Browning — the *Prometheus* in the works of Mrs. Browning.

Æsop: Caxton translation with elaborate introduction by Joseph Jacobs [Nutt].

Alfieri: verse translation by E. A. Bowring (two volumes of Bohn's Libraries).

American Literature: see under **Gosse**. — Literary History of America by Barrett Wendell [Scribner].

Apocrypha: Revised Version [Oxford or Cambridge University Press]. — Three books (*Wisdom of Solomon*, *Ecclesiasticus*, *Tobit*) are included in the Modern Reader's Bible: see under **Bible**. — International Journal of Apocrypha [published by International Society of Apocrypha, 15 Paternoster Row, London].

they were associated with the study of World Literature in English. — Moreover, all these alternatives ignore the Bible as an essential of literary education.

World Literature is not a special study, but belongs to the general side of education — and to all stages of general education, elementary and advanced.

In our schemes of liberal education as a whole it is the general side that at present needs strengthening — as specialization advances there is need from time to time for revision of the whole field of knowledge, and so for reorganization of the general culture which is the link between special studies.

Present tendency of universities to narrow into schools. — True ideal of culture, not its possession, but its diffusion. — Ideal of a university as a combination of teachers and investigators sound: but investigation improperly limited to new knowledge: diffusion of knowledge a form of enlargement of knowledge. — The overemphasis of the school function of universities has a disastrous effect on the training of teachers: broad culture the best training for the work of a teacher.

Rise of the ideal of "university extension": that is, culture becoming a universal interest of life. — The term implies extension (1) to all classes (2) to the whole period of life. — Existing schemes of liberal education vitiated by confusion with the school function of universities: for professional training concentration in a limited period, for general culture extension to the whole of life, is the main thing. — Thus the cultural teaching of universities should aim at (1) stimulation of interest (2) presentation of ground plan in a field of study as chart to guide study of the future.

Apart from the action of universities, the "university extension" ideal remains: volunteer university of self-directed education. — To this World Literature has a special appeal, as a study created by the general reader and not by the academic world.

Luke and Acts with Pauline Epistles inserted), *St. Matthew* (including General Epistles), *St. John*]. — Supplementary volumes, intended chiefly for young people: *Bible Stories* (*Old Testament*), *Bible Stories* (*New Testament*), *Biblical Masterpieces.*—See above, note to page 64.

The Literary Study of the Bible: An Account of the leading forms of literature represented in the sacred writings: by Richard G. Moulton [Boston, D. C. Heath; London, Isbister & Co.].

Short Introduction to the Literature of the Bible: by Richard G. Moulton [D. C. Heath].

Bickersteth: *Yesterday, To-day, and Forever* [Rivingtons].

Bidpai, Fables of: translation by I. G. N. Keith-Falconer [Cambridge University Press].

Boccaccio's *Decameron:* translation published by Routledge — translation with illustrations by Chatto & Windus.

Bohemian Literature: see under Gosse.

Boito: musical version of Faust published by Ricordi [London].

Calderon: Fitzgerald's version of Calderon's *Il Magico Prodigioso* in *Eight Plays of Calderon translated* [Macmillan].

Celtic Literature: see under **Arnold, Matthew.**

Cervantes' *Don Quixote:* translation of P. Motteux in Everyman's Library (two volumes).

Chaucer: Works in three volumes of the World's Classics. — The *Canterbury Tales* (in part) edited "for the average reader" by Principal Burrell, one volume of Everyman's Library.

Chinese Literature: see under **Gosse.**

Cicero: Essays on Old Age and Friendship, one volume in Bohn's Libraries.

Courthope, W. J.: History of English Poetry, in five volumes [Macmillan].

Courts of Love: by J. F. Rowbotham [Sonnenschein].

Dante: *Divine Comedy:* translation with notes by E. H. Plumptre [D. C. Heath] — Longfellow's translation [one volume of Uni-

LIST OF BOOKS

Apollonius Rhodius: translation in verse of the *Argonautica* by A. S. Way [Temple Classics] — prose translation with notes by E. P. Coleridge [Bohn's Libraries].

Arabian Nights Entertainments: one volume edition [Routledge] — many others.

Arabic Literature: see under **Gosse.**

Aristophanes: translations (preserving metrical changes) by B. B. Rogers [Bell] — of four plays by Bartle Frere [in World's Classics] — of *Birds* by (late) Professor B. H. Kennedy [Macmillan].

Arnold, Edwin: "The Song of Songs" in *Indian Poetry* volume of his works [Kegan Paul] — or one volume edition of his poems [Hurst].

Arnold, Matthew: *Celtic Literature,* one volume of Everyman's Library — Select Essays, two volumes of the same. — Complete prose works (seven volumes) published by Macmillan.

Aurelius: see under **Marcus.**

Bacon: *Advancement of Learning* edited by Aldis Wright [Oxford University Press] — *Essays* in Temple Classics, etc.

Bailey's *Festus.* [Routledge].

Balzac: see under **De Balzac.**

Beaumont and Fletcher: Dramas in two volumes [Routledge].

Berlioz: musical version of *Faust* published by Schirmer, New York.

Bible.

The Modern Reader's Bible: Books of the Bible, with three books of the Apocrypha, presented in modern literary form, edited with Introductions and Notes by Richard G. Moulton [Macmillan]. — Complete in one volume (1733 pages), cloth or leather. — The same in twenty-one separate volumes, cloth or leather. [*Genesis, The Exodus, Deuteronomy, The Judges, The Kings, The Chronicles; Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Daniel and the Minor Prophets; The Psalms* (two volumes), *Biblical Idyls* (containing Song of Songs and books of Esther, Ruth, and Tobit); *Proverbs, Ecclesiasticus, Ecclesiastes* and *Wisdom of Solomon, Job; St. Luke and St. Paul* (two volumes containing books of

French Literature: see under **Gosse**.

Froissart's *Chronicles:* editions by Macmillan or Routledge. — Condensed edition in Everyman's Library.

German Literature: see under **Gosse**.

Goethe's Faust: translations of Bayard Taylor [Houghton] — of Theodore Martin [Blackwood] — of Anna Swanwick [one volume in Bohn's Libraries] — of A. G. Latham [one volume in Everyman's Library]. — Dr. Anster's version is free, but very suggestive [two volumes in Universal Library: the first also contains Marlowe's *Faustus*].

Golden Legend (Mediæval): seven volumes in Temple Classics.

Gosse, Edmund: Editor of Series "Literatures of the World" [Appleton].

American: W. P. Trent.
Arabic: C. Huart.
Bohemian: Count Lützow.
Chinese: H. A. Giles.
(Modern) English: Edmund Gosse.
French: Edward Dowden.
German: Calvin Thomas.
(Ancient) Greek: Gilbert Murray.
Hungarian: Riedl.
Italian: Richard Garnett.
Japanese: W. G. Aston.
Russian: K. Waliszewski.
Sanskrit: A. A. Macdowell.

Gounod: musical version of Faust [Schirmer, New York].

Gracian: *Art of Worldly Wisdom*, with introduction by Joseph Jacobs in Golden Treasury Series [Macmillan].

Greek Drama: *Ancient Classical Drama, A Study in Literary Evolution:* by Richard G. Moulton [Oxford University Press]. — Greek Theatre: Haigh's *Attic Theatre* [Oxford University Press].

Greek Literature: see under **Gosse**.

Greek Novels: Greek Romances in one volume of Bohn's Libra-

versal Library] — Cary's translation [one volume of Everyman's Library]. — *Vita Nuova* in Rossetti's translation [Temple Classics] — *Convivio* and Latin Works translated by P. H. Wicksteed [two volumes of Temple Classics]. — Mrs. M. F. Rossetti's *Shadow of Dante* [Rivingtons] — Dr. W. T. Harris's *Spiritual Sense of Dante's Divina Commedia* [Appleton].

De Balzac. Several editions: one (with Professor Saintsbury's introductions) in 40 volumes [Dutton]. — Single novels (with Saintsbury's introductions) make volumes in Everyman's Library: *Wild Ass's Skin, Eugénie Grandet, Old Goriot, The Chouans, The Quest of the Absolute, Cousin Pons*, and others.

Don Quixote: see under **Cervantes.**

Dryden's *All for Love*, in edition of his complete works.

Earle: see under **Microcosmography.**

English Literature: see under **Gosse.**

Epictetus: translation by Elizabeth Carter in Everyman's Library: by T. W. Higginson [Little].

Erasmus: translation of *Colloquies* [Gibbings] — of *Praise of Folly* with Holbein's illustrations [Scribner].

Euripides: complete translation (observing all metrical changes) by A. S. Way [Macmillan] — of six plays (*Hippolytus, Bacchanals, Trojan Women, Electra, Medea* in one volume, and *Iphigenia in Taurica* in separate volume) by Professor Gilbert Murray [Oxford University Press] — of *Bacchanals* by Milman in volume 58 of Universal Library. The other plays in this volume, and volumes 54 and 61, are very readable, but only partially represent the metrical changes. — A version of the *Hercules* in Browning's *Aristophanes' Apology.*

Everyman (with other interludes) in Everyman's Library.

Faust, Puppet Play of: see under **Hedderwick.**

Feltham's *Resolves:* in Temple Classics.

Fitzgerald, Edward: Life and Literary Remains, edited by Aldis Wright, in three volumes [Macmillan]. Contains versions of Calderon's *Il Magico Prodigioso* and of the *Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam.*

Irish Literature: Douglas Hyde's *Literary History of Ireland* [Scribner].

Italian Literature: see under **Gosse.**

Japanese Literature: see under **Gosse.**

Jonson, Ben: his *Timber* edited by Gollancz in Temple Classics.

Kalevala: translated by Kirby [two volumes of Everyman's Library] — translation and introduction by J. M. Crawford [Robert Clarke Company, Cincinnati].

Koran: elaborate edition, translation by G. H. Palmer, in Sacred Books of the East: two volumes [Oxford University Press] — Rodwell's translation in Everyman's Library. — Many others.

La Bruyère: translated as *Morals and Manners of Seventeenth Century* by Helen Stott [McClurg].

La Rochefoucauld: *Reflections and Moral Maxims* with introductory essay by Sainte-Beuve [Chatto and Windus].

Lucretius: monumental edition of Munro in three volumes, the translation volume sold separately [Deighton] — translation by Cyril Bailey in Oxford Library of Translations [Oxford University Press].

Luther: *Table Talk* in National Library [Cassell].

Macaulay: Essays in two volumes of Everyman's Library.

Mackail: Life of William Morris in two volumes [Longmans].

Macpherson: see **Ossian.**

Malory's *Morte d'Arthur:* Globe edition [Macmillan].

Marcus Aurelius: *Meditations* in Temple Classics.

Marlowe's *Life and Death of Dr. Faustus:* many editions: *e.g.* in Universal Library (with First Part of Goethe's *Faust*) — in Temple Classics — edited by Ward [Oxford University Press].

Microcosmography (Earle's): in Arber Reprints or Temple Classics.

Milton: Clarendon Press edition [Oxford University Press].

Molière: elaborate edition (translation) by Van Laun in six volumes [Barrie, Philadelphia] — prose version in three volumes of

ries — Apuleius's works, one volume of Bohn's Libraries — Apuleius's *Cupid and Psyche*, one volume of Temple Classics.

Greek Orators: Orations of Demosthenes translated by Rann Kennedy, five volumes in Bohn's Libraries — oration *On the Crown* also published as separate volume.

Grote: History of Greece (full on the literary side), twelve volumes in Everyman's Library.

Harrison, Frederic: *Choice of Books* [Macmillan].

Hedderwick, T. H. C.: *Dr. Faustus* (contains Puppet Play). [Kegan Paul].

Hesiod: translation (prose) in Bohn's Libraries.

Homer: **Iliad.** Translation in ballad hexameters by A. S. Way [Low] — in prose (but of exceptional value) by Lang, Leaf, and Myers [Macmillan] — in blank verse by Bryant [Houghton] — in heroic couplets by Pope [in World's Classics] — in Alexandrines by Chapman [two volumes of Temple Classics]. — Many others.

Homer: **Odyssey.** Translation in ballad hexameters by William Morris [Longmans] — in blank verse by Bryant [Houghton] — in Spenserian stanzas by Worsley [Blackwood] — in heroic couplets by Chapman [two volumes in Temple Classics] — in rhythmical prose (an interesting experiment) by G. H. Palmer [Houghton]. — Many others.

Horace: Odes by various translators, one volume in Temple Classics. — Epodes translated by A. S. Way [Macmillan]. — Satires (and other poems) translated by Conington [Bell].

Hugo, Victor: Dramas (three) translated in one volume of Bohn's Libraries. — Novels: many editions: *e.g. Les Misérables* [two volumes] and *Notre Dame* [one volume] in Everyman's Library. [*L' Homme qui rit* variously translated as *By the King's Command* or *The Man who Laughs*.]

Hungarian Literature: see under **Gosse**.

Hymns (Latin): R. C. Trench's *Sacred Latin Poetry* [Kegan Paul].

Indian Literature: Frazer's *Literary History of India* [Scribner]. — See also Sanskrit Literature under **Gosse**.

Plautus: prose translation in two volumes of Bohn's Libraries — verse translation in four volumes by Bonnell Thornton out of print.

Plutarch's Lives: North's translation in ten volumes of Temple Classics — Dryden's translation edited by Clough in three volumes of Everyman's Library — Langhorne's translation in one volume [Routledge].

Rabelais: translation with illustrations by Gustave Doré [Chatto and Windus].

Racine: metrical version by R. B. Boswell in two volumes of Bohn's Libraries.

Reynard the Fox: translation of F. S. Ellis, with designs by Walter Crane [Nutt].

Rochefoucauld: see under **La Rochefoucauld**.

Romance of the Rose: version of F. S. Ellis in three volumes of the Temple Classics.

Rossetti, Mrs.: see under **Dante**.

Russian Literature: see under **Gosse**.

Sackville: Works [Scribner]. — His *Induction* etc., in Southey's British Poets.

Sainte-Beuve. Essays translated by Sharp [Gibbings or Lippincott] — Portraits, by Wormeley and Ives [Putnam].

Saintsbury, Professor George: editor of Series "Periods of European Literature" [Scribner]. — The Dark Ages (W. P. Ker) — The Flourishing of Romance and the Rise of Allegory (editor) — The Fourteenth Century (F. J. Snell) — The Transition Period (G. Gregory Smith) — The Earlier Renaissance (editor) — The Later Renaissance (David Hannay) — The First Half of 17th Century (H. J. C. Grierson) — The Augustan Ages (Oliver Elton) — The Mid-Eighteenth Century (J. H. Millar) — The Romantic Revolt (C. E. Vaughan) — The Romantic Triumph (T. S. Omond) — The Later Nineteenth Century (editor).

Sanskrit Literature: see under **Gosse**.

Bohn's Library.—New and spirited version by Curtis Hidden Page, in two volumes [Putnam].

Montaigne: in three volumes of Everyman's Library — or three volumes in World's Classics — in one volume [Routledge].

Morris, William: all his works mentioned in the text are published by Longmans. — *Syllabus of Study in the Poetry and Fiction of William Morris* by Richard G. Moulton [Chicago University Press].

Morte d'Arthur: see under **Malory.**

Moulton, Richard G.: see under **Bible, Greek Drama, Shakespeare.**

Nibelungenlied: *Fall of the Nibelungs* one volume of Everyman's Library—verse translation by W. N. Lettsom [Williams]—by Alice Horton [Macmillan].

Norse Sagas: in the Saga Library edited by William Morris and Magnusson [Quaritch]—the Laxdale Saga translated by Muriel A. C. Press in Temple Classics.

Omar Khayyam: his **Rubaiyat** in Fitzgerald's version published by Macmillan, and many others. — See under **Fitzgerald.**

Ossian: the Macpherson poems published by Macmillan.

Overbury, Sir Thomas: Works [Scribner].

Ovid: translation of his poems (prose) in three volumes of Bohn's Libraries. — Verse translation of the *Metamorphoses* by Henry King [Blackwood].

Palgrave's *Golden Treasury* in Everyman's Library.

Pascal: the *Pensées* translated by W. F. Trotter in Temple Classics.

Percy Ballads: as *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, two volumes in Everyman's Library. Several other editions.

Petrarch: translation in Bohn's Library.

Plato: monumental translation and commentary of Jowett in five volumes [Oxford University Press] — Cary's translation in six volumes of Bohn's Libraries. — Separate dialogues: the *Republic* as volume 611, and others as volumes 456 and 457 in Everyman's Library. — Many other translations: *e.g.* of the *Gorgias* by E. M. Cope [Deighton].

Tottel's Miscellany: in Arber Reprints.
Tupper, Martin: *Proverbial Philosophy* [Ward; Darrow].

Universal Literature, Handbook of: by Mrs. A. C. L. Botta [Houghton].

Virgil: translation of *Æneid* in ballad hexameters by William Morris [Longmans] — in Scott's metre (an interesting experiment) by Conington [Longmans]. In Professor Conington's edition of Virgil with English notes [three volumes of the Bibliotheca Classica published by Bell] the Introductions have a bearing on general literature. — Translation of the *Æneid* by Fairfax Taylor in Everyman's Library. — Dryden's translation in the World's Classics. — Translation of *Eclogues* and *Georgics* by T. F. Royds in Everyman's Library.

Wagner: translation of *Ring of Nibelung* by G. T. Dippold [Holt] — by H. and F. Corder, German and English on opposite pages [Schott & Co., London].
Way, Arthur S.: translator: see under **Apollonius, Euripides, Homer, Horace.**
Whitman, Walt: complete works [McKay].

Xenophon: translation of the *Memorabilia* in Temple Classics.

Schumann: musical version of Faust published by Novello, London.

Scott, Sir Walter: poems in Globe edition [Macmillan] — novels in 48 volumes of Temple Classics. — Many other editions.

Seeley, Sir J. R.: *Natural Religion* [Macmillan].

Selden: *Table Talk* in Temple Classics, or National Series [Cassell].

Seneca: **Essays**: *On Benefits* in Temple Classics — Minor Essays translated by Aubrey Stewart in Bohn's Libraries.

Seneca: **Tragedies**: verse translation (retaining metrical changes) with notes, etc., by F. J. Miller [Chicago University Press].

Shakespeare: *Shakespeare as a Dramatic Artist* [Oxford University Press] and *Shakespeare as a Dramatic Thinker* [Macmillan] by Richard G. Moulton.

Sienkiewicz: novels translated by Jeremiah Curtin and others [Little, Brown & Co.].

Sophocles: translations (preserving metrical changes) by Lewis Campbell [in World's Classics] and Plumptre [D. C. Heath].— Translation of *Œdipus the King* by E. D. A. Morshead [Macmillan].

Southey's *Curse of Kehama* in National Library [Cassell].

Spectator of Addison, etc.: four volumes in Everyman's Library edited by Gregory Smith — in one volume [Macmillan]. — Selections, excellently arranged, edited by T. Arnold [Oxford University Press].

Spenser's *Faerie Queene:* Globe edition [Macmillan].

Spohr's musical version of Faust: only in libraries.

Stanley's *History of the Jewish Church* (touching largely upon biblical literature) in three volumes [Scribner].

Swinburne: *Atalanta in Calydon* [Chatto] — *Erechtheus* [Chatto].

Terence: prose translation in Bohn's Libraries — verse translation by Colman out of print.

Theocritus: translation of A. Lang in Golden Treasury Series [Macmillan].

Thucydides: translation by Richard Crawley in Everyman's Library — by Dale (two volumes) in Bohn's Libraries.

GENERAL INDEX

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